THE HUE and CRY OF CONSCIENCE AFTER Secure Sinners; OR THE ALARM of CONSCIENCE In order to the Discovery of HIDDEN GUILT

The Heaven shall reveal his Iniquity, and the Earth shall rise up against him. Job 20.27
Thou hast set our Iniquities before thee, our secret Sins in the light of thy Countenance Psal. 90.8.

By JOHN RYTHER
Minister of the Gospel.

LONDON, Printed by J. D. for John White, at the Three Bibles in the Minories, 1680.

THE HUE and CRY OF CONSCIENCE AFTER Secure Sinners; OR THE ALARM of CONSCIENCE In order to the Discovery of HIDDEN GUILT

The Heaven shall reveal his Iniquity, and the Earth shall rise up against him. Job 20.27
Thou hast set our Iniquities before thee, our secret Sins in the light of thy Countenance Psal. 90. 8.

By JOHN RYTHER
Minister of the Gospel.

LONDON, Printed by J. D. for John White, at the Three Bibles in the Minories, 1680.

BRITISH
MUSEUM

TO THE

Serious and Impartial

READER.

THe *preſent Day cannot but be looked upon to be an evil Day,* (*even by thoſe who have but their Eyes half opened.*) *That which makes a Day evil, is the Sin of the Day; which brings on the dangers of the Day, and God's threatnings to cauſe* our Sun to go down at Noon, and to darken the earth in the clear

Day. And I will turn your Feasts into Mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentations; and I will bring up Sackcloth upon all Loins, and Baldness upon every Head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only Son, and the end thereof as a bitter Day. *Now when the evils of our Sins abound among us, and the evils of God's Threatnings impend over us, it is a seasonable time to contribute to a check of the one, and to a preventing of the other; which must be by some awakening, or searching Calls and Crys to sleepy and drowzy Consciences, which is the sole Design of this small Treatise.*

Three sorts of Readers it is like to fall into the Hands of.

1. *Of*

1. *Of awakened or it may be ſtartled Conſciences, but half awakened.* Or,

2. *Into the hands of ſuch who are ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience.* Or,

3. *Into the hands of ſuch whoſe Conſciences are ſeared.*

Now for the firſt of theſe, I would offer ſome things to ſerious Conſideration. 1. *Whatever thou find'ſt here to concern thee, do not put it off: Know, is a renewed Call of God to thee, and ſay, as in that caſe,* Lo this we have ſearched, ſo it is, hear it, and know it for thy good: [*Or as it is in the* Hebrew] f r thy ſelf. *Know it to a practical and profitable improvement of it. Doſt thou know what thou mayſt find in following the Search? Hadſt not thou better ſearch Truth,* Job 5.27.

to ſet thee upon a diligent ſearch for Guilt, that hath laid long hid, than let God find it out to thy ſhame, ſorrow, and confuſion of Face? O, be not thou troubled that thy Conſcience is ſtartled, and begins to fly in thy Face! Know now, it is a Call of Chriſt, ſaying, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light. *Little do Sinners know the danger of putting off Chriſt's renewed Calls.*

Ephes 5. 14.

2. *Carry what concerns thee in this Treatiſe, to God in Prayer: Conviction looks well, when it puts upon Supplication. O, this is the great Reaſon, why ſo many awakenings by the Miniſtry of the Word, or by Providential Diſpenſations, die and come to nothing, becauſe they*

are

are not prayed over. O, how hard is it to bring guilty obſtinate Sinners upon their Knees! We find when Ephraim *bemoaned himſelf, and lay under Conviction, he then preſently fell on praying:* Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Jer. 31. 18.

O Sinners! know that ſuch Convictions as are not attended with Prayer, will but prove aggravations of your Sin and Guilt another day. As ſoon as ever God had wrought throughly upon Paul, *it was ſaid,* Behold, he prayeth. *Prayer is the firſt breath of the new Creature.*

3. *What concerns thee here, conſider it well, weigh it in the ballance of the Sanctuary, prove whether it be according to the ſtandard of the Sanctuary. Poor*

Souls hear much, and it may be reade much, but this marrs all, they conſider little: Now it is the conſiderate Reader that is the profitable Reader.

2 Tim. 2. 7. Conſider what thou readeſt, and the Lord give thee underſtanding.

1. *Conſider the Word thou heareſt, and thou readeſt, ſhall judge thee at the laſt Day: All thou haſt heard, all thou haſt read, ſhall come in as witneſs againſt thee; And canſt thou ſtand before ſuch a Teſtimony?*

2. *Conſider thy own Conſcience in that Day will be a thouſand witneſſes: And canſt thou* Rev. 20. 12. *then liſt up thy Head when the Books ſhall be opened, and amongſt the reſt, this ſealed Book of thy own guilty Conſcience? where thy Iniquity that hath been ſewed up, ſhall be brought*

to light; and thy Tranſgreſſion that hath been ſealed up in a Bag, ſhall be openly detected and diſcovered. Job 14. 17.

3. *Conſider the Day is haſtening upon thee, that* the iniquities of thy heels ſhall compaſs thee about. *O how wilt thou, poor Sinner, be entangled and perplexed with thy Sin and Guilt! Some underſtand by Heel, the laſt part of a Mans life towards his Death; And doth not ſuch a day haſten upon you? O what work will Guilt make in the Conſcience in a day of Diſtreſs! conſider by* Joſeph's *Brethren.* Pſal. 49.

4. *Conſider how thy Conſcience conſents as thou readeſt. Is not this true, ſays Conſcience? Haſt not thou found and felt it ſo, ſays Conſcience? Is not thy Conſcience put to ſilence*

as

as thou readeſt: Conſider that the Truths are commended to thy Conſcience.

5. Conſider how ſad it would be for all thy awakenings, all thy touches, all thy impreſſions, all thy Convictions to be loſt at laſt. O Sinners, how will ſuch be condemned out of their own Mouths! Can theſe be loſt, and your Souls ſaved? of all your loſſes you may reckon theſe among your greateſt loſſes.

4. What concerns thee here, remark, and remember; you may read much, and remark little, and this marrs all you read: this remarking is Conſcience taking Notes, and making Animadverſions upon Truths. You do not bring your Conſciences to reade Books: ſay as you reade, O my Conſcience, mark this! this nearly concerns thee! You know

know Men mark and obſerve what concerns them.

The ſecond ſort of Readers this little Tract may fall into their Hands, are ſuch who are ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience, upon whoſe Door-poſts the Blood of the Paſchal Lamb is ſprinkled; who with Paul, *daily exerciſe themſelves in all good Conſcience, both towards God and Man.*

1. *O do you reade, and bleſs God that you have to all Challenges and Queſtions, the anſwer of a good Conſcience; that you can ſilence all your Objections and Accuſations by Faith in the Blood of Chriſt; and can ſing that triumphant Song even in your Militant State,* Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? *&c. Can every one ſay ſo? can every Profeſſon*

Rom. 8. 33.

say so? can every Child of God say so? Are there not many that have been a long time learning to sing this Song, and have not learnt it to this day?

2. *Let this be your care to preserve the tenderness of your Consciences. You may by guilt (Sirs) benum your Consciences, as you find by what you here reade: A smiting checking Conscience is a very great Mercy, tho little priz'd, or esteemed by the most.*

3. *Remember how bitter Sin was to you, before you came to know what peace of Conscience meant, how many a bitter Tear it fetched from your Eyes? how many deep and bitter sighs from your Hearts? yea, even to the breaking of your Loins? O what Gall and Wormwood was it to your Souls! How often*

ten did you ſay, will it not be bitterneſs in the latter end? How often did you take up that Language to your own Souls, This is thy way and thy doings? becauſe it is bitter, it reaches to thy Heart, &c. But yet as you reade, do you remember how ſweetly all this ended, in God's ſpeaking peace to your Souls, and you no more turning to Folly.

4. *Tremble to think of loſing the Peace that God hath ſpoken to your Conſciences, under ſenſe of Guilt, when you meet with that guilt which concerns you. O, let the loſs of your peace be like Hell to your Souls! O, blot not that Pardon your Redeemer hath written ſo legibly in his own Blood! Blurring off your Pardon may coſt you dear.*

5. Be

5. *Be afraid of the leaſt Guilt, the leaſt Sin, becauſe it is Sin. When Satan cannot prevail with you to venture upon greater Sins, then he will tempt to leſſer Sins: But know you not that the leaſt Sin is Soul-defiling, yea, the leaſt Sin is Soul-damning, unleſs the Blood of Chriſt ſprinkle your Conſciences? How have many Souls groaned under the guilt of ſuch Sins for many Years, when God hath ſet them home upon your Conſciences?*

The third ſort of Readers, into whoſe hands this little piece may fall, are ſuch whoſe Conſciences are ſeared (ſuch the Apoſtle mentions) theſe are inſenſible, Truths make no impreſſion upon them, they are benummed: The Apoſtle expreſſes it, by being paſt feeling. And

1 Tim. 4. 2.

Epheſ. 4. 19.

when

when they are arrived at such an height of Sin, what do such do? The Text tells you, They commit all Uncleanneſs with greedineſs. *Now to such I would ſay,*

1. *The day is coming, thy ſeared and inſenſible Conſcience ſhall condemn, and riſe up in judgment againſt thee. And, O, then who can ſtand before the witneſs of an awakned Conſcience! You may as well think to dwell with everlaſting Burnings, and tormenting Flames, as avoid or evade the Teſtimony of a tormented and awakened Conſcience. Nay, know that ſometimes this Hell hath begun here. Will not* Cain *tell you, while he crys out,* My puniſhment is greater than I can bear, *No torment like the torment of a guilty Conſcience?*

Nay,

Nay, ask Adam, *and he will tell you when he was afraid, and hid himself from the presence of God. O, Guilt, you know, cannot endure the presence of the Judge. O, doth not* Pashur's *case speak forth this truth! What a terror to himself was he? Did not* Judas *preach this Doctrine when he cri'd out,* I have sinned in betraying innocent Blood. Nero, *that Monster, when he had killed his Mother* Agrippina, *and his Wife, and set* Rome *on fire; after all this Guilt, at last felt an Hell in his Conscience, and could not rest Day nor Night; so that when he died, he cried out, his Mother, Wife, and Father, all will'd him to die.* Richard *the* 3d, *O what a guilty tormenting Conscience had he after the Murder of his Nephews in*

the

the Tower? and the Night before he was ſlain at Boſworth, *he dreamed he thought all the Devils in Hell were halling him in moſt hideous and ugly Shapes. What ſays Judge* Morgan *to this caſe, after he had unrighteouſly paſſed Sentence upon the* Lady Jane, *afterwards feeling an Hell in his Conſcience, cried out,* O, take away the Lady *Jane,* take away the Lady *Jane! Which made one ſay,*

The Guilt which from unſeen
Pollution ſprings,
Pale ſweating Horror in the
Boſom brings.

2. *What tho your Conſciences be ſeared upon the account of your Guilt being undiſcovered; Yet know, God many times hath found*

found out Guilt, in an extraordinary way. Providence treads not always the same Paths in discovering hidden Guilt, he can cause a Bird of the Air to carry the Voice, and that which hath Wings to tell the matter. *He can reveal Iniquity from Heaven.* The Heavens shall reveal his Iniquity, and the Earth shall rise up against him. *One of our* * *Judges riding his Circuit of late Years, met with this Passage: One being Murdered, and the Murderer not being discovered, the Murderer being brought to the dead Corps, the Corps opened his Eyes at the Murderer, and fell into a Sweat. This the Judge related to a godly Minister then living. History is full of such Providential bring-*

Eccles. 10. ult.

Job 20. 7.

* Lord St. John.

ing

ing hidden Guilt to light.

3. Know, poor Sinners, while your Consciences are seared, you are Satans marked Slaves. In Ancient Times they used to mark their Slaves; and the Holy Ghost alludes to it, when we reade of the Mark of the Beast in the Forehead, or in the Hand. This Searing-Iron puts Satan's Brand upon you, you are his. And, O poor Sinners, did you but, as you reade this, believe it, what restless Days and Nights would you have, until you had some hopes of your escape from this House of Bondage? Can you be content to live and die in the Devil's Drudgery? Can you be content to be his bored and marked Slaves, his Servants for ever? Then you must have

the

the Wages of such Servants, and such a Service. The Wages of Sin is Death. *Death Spiritual, Death Eternal.*

4. *Know, poor Sinners, there is not so much as one seared Conscience in Hell; they are sadly awakened that are awakened with Hells flames about their Ears. If you could hear the Crys and Shrieks of tormented Souls, you would say Hell is full of sense of Guilt. But alas, now it is too late, then Repentance is too late. They are all saying, This and this hath their own Ways and Doings procured unto them. O, it is bitter! O, it reaches to their Heart! But, O Sinners, this should have been sooner!*

5. *Know, poor Sinners, what you reade here, if you go*

on in Sin, you will feel another day for an aggravation of Sin, yea, and Condemnation too. What, reade what may prevent your Ruine, and yet run on! What, ſplit your Souls upon theſe Rocks and Sands, you ſaw ſuch Sea-marks before to keep you off? O, is not this to be wilful in your Perdition? Is not this to run headlong to Deſtruction? O Sinners, hear God calling out of Heaven to you by his Servants Preaching to you, Printing for you, why will you die? why will you periſh? why will you run on in Sin, when you know that when Luſt hath conceived, it brings forth Sin, Jam. 1. 15. and Sin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth Death. *O then, poor Soul, Reade, and Hear,*

and

and Pray, that thou may'ſt pro
fit by all, bleſs God for all, an
bring forth the Fruits of all.

Thus prays thy Servant

for thy Soul,

J. R

THE

Gen. 42. 21.

And they ſaid one unto another, Verily we are guilty concerning our Brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his Soul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear: therefore this diſtreſs is come upon us.

THe Text refers to the Tragical ſtory of *Joſephs* ſale by his Brethren. The occaſion of which ſeverity towards him, you have mentioned, (*viz.*) Their envy to him upon the account of the Dream he had of his Advancement and Preferment above them. And likewiſe their way they took to

prevent the accompliſhment of his Dream, (*viz.*) Their ſelling of him, tho this was the way to bring it to paſs: *Therefore* (ſays he) *it was not you, but God that ſent me hither.*— It is to be obſerved, that the Ways and Methods God takes many times to bring to paſs his Deſigns, are ſtrange and improbable to us. This was a moſt unlikely way in an Eye of Reaſon to *Joſeph*'s advancement, yet it was God's way.

When *Joſeph* was advanced, the Lord brings a Famine upon *Canaan*, the Land of his Father and Brethren, and they came now down to *Egypt* to buy Corn; and little did they know it was their ſold Brother *Joſeph* that they bowed to for Bread, accord-

ing

ing to his Dream, in the bowing of the Sheaves. God now brings Affliction upon them, and *Joseph* he deals roughly with them, by way of Probation and Temptation, and now they find themselves bryer'd, and plunged into a pit of Diſtreſs. They all joyntly reflect upon themſelves, to ſearch and make a diſcovery of the Matter, as the Text tells us.

In which we have 1. Their Reflection.

2. We have the Occaſion of it.

1. We have their Self-Reflection and Accuſation: *And they ſaid one to another, We are verily guilty*, &c. (As one ſays well upon it). We have here the force of Conſcience, and the fruits of Af-

fliction. Conſcience calling old Sins to a new Reckoning; faithful in Recording, and fearful in Accuſing.

2. We have the occaſion of it. *Joſeph* handling them ſeverely, and putting them in Ward three days, and binding them to the terms of bringing down their younger Brother: which they knew were hard Terms, becauſe their Father's Life was bound up in him.

3. We have farther in the Text, their Juſtification of God in all this: *Therefore this Diſtreſs is come upon us.*—— O now the Lord hath found us out, and is reckoning with us for our guilt, and all his Procedures with us are very Righteous, in what he ſuffers to come upon us.

The

The Reflection is that part of the Text, I principally aim at.

I. We have the Reflection it ſelf: *In that we ſaw the Anguiſh of his Soul, when he beſought us.* O now Conſcience is buſie and active! O now their Guilt lies uppermoſt, and they preſently reflect upon it.— As if they ſhould ſay, O what hard Hearts had we to him in his diſtreſs! O what bloody cruel Brethren were we to him! What Wretches were we to ſin againſt the Law of Nature, againſt the Law of God, againſt our own Conſciences! Here is an Aſſeveration in the Accuſation, *Verily we are guilty*; and it hath a *Verily* written upon the head of it. They no ways heſitate, or doubt

in the leaſt about it.

2. Here is in the Reflection, or Accuſation, the aggravation of their Guilt. 1. In that it was to their own Brother; and now this they reflect upon.— *We are guilty concerning our Brother.* It was their own Brother, and ſo a piece of Unnatural Guilt for one Brother to do thus by another. It is not only Guilt, but circumſtances of Guilt, that will fly in the faces of our Conſciences in a day of Diſtreſs.

II. Aggravation in it was, that their Eyes did not affect their hearts. *We ſaw the anguiſh of his Soul.* O! now it riſes in their Conſciences.

3. Aggravation of Guilt in their Reflection: *He beſought us.* His cries and prayers

ers ſhould have pitied and melted their Hearts.

4. Aggravation, *We would not hear.* They turned a deaf Ear to their Brother's crys. O! now all this comes freſh to their Minds, in the day of their Diſtreſs.

5. Aggravation. It was a deliberate conſulted Caſe. *Come let us kill him.* It was an adviſed Act.

III. As we have the Reflection it ſelf, and the Aggravations of it; So alſo we have obſervable, that it was by *joynt* conſent. This Reflecting, it was not one or two of them, but *They ſaid one unto another.* It was a *joynt* confeſſion (*Nemine contradicente*) they differed not in the caſe, their Sentiments were the ſame; therefore they

jointly conclude, that they were all Guilty concerning their Brother.

IV. The occasion of this joynt Reflection, and Accusation, was their distress; *Therefore is this distress come upon us.*

The whole of the Text resolves into these two Practical Truths.

First, That Guilt will walk in Sinners Consciences a great while after the Fact committed.

Secondly, That in a Day of Affliction, Conscience is often quick and active in its Reflections. Thus it was with them; *Therefore is this Distress come upon us.*

1. Guilt will walk in the Con-

Conſciences of Sinners a great while after the Fact committed.

This is plain from the Text. *Joſeph* had been a great while ſold by his Brethren. *Joſeph* did certainly ſpend many Years in *Potiphar*'s Houſe. Some ſay ten Years, ſome ſay eleven Years, before he was caſt into Priſon. It is true, it is ſaid (*Chap.* 39. 7.) after theſe things, his Maſter's Wife caſt her Eyes upon *Joſeph*.—(It is thought by ſome Expoſitors, it is a miſtake to reade it) *After theſe things*. The *Latine* Tranſlation reads it, *After many days*. It muſt be reckoned thus, *He was* 17 *years of Age when he was ſold*, Gen. 37. 2. And, *He was* 30 *years of Age when he expounded* Pharaoh's *Dream, and*

was delivered by him. So that that time was 13 Years [or 14, as you reckon the 17*th* Year when he was ſold either begun or ended] *Gen.* 41. 46. During which time it is ſuppoſed he ſpent 10 or 11 in the Houſe of *Potiphar*, and 3 in the Priſon. Now to theſe 13 Years, from the time of his Sale, to the time of his Advancement by *Pharaoh*, you muſt add the 7 Years of Plenty that was in the Land of *Egypt* before the Famine began, (the time when his Brethren came to him for Corn, and when he dealt thus with them, (as in the Story) *and this diſtreſs was upon them*, mentioned in the Text.) So that the whole, from the Sale to this time, was 20, or 21 * Years, (if you

* As Dr. *Lightfoot*, and others.

you reckon the 17*th* Year of his Age but to be begun when he was Sold, and the time of this their Diſtreſs, to be the firſt year of the Famine) and 22, * if the firſt year of Famine was expired (as ſome think) ſo that it was now 20 Years at the leaſt, or 22 at the moſt, that this Guilt had ſlept in their Conſciences, and now God awakens it.

* As Mr. *Burroughs* and others.

Guilt now riſes and walks in their Conſciences after ſo many Years being forgotten. As we ſay of Murder, *It will out*; ſo we may ſay of other Sins, *They will out*. That is a great Text: When the two Tribes and an half were to take up their Habitations on the other ſide *Jordan*: *Moſes* preaches a very home Sermon to them, counſelling them

them ſo and ſo, and con-
Numb. 32. 23. cludes: *But if you will not do ſo, behold, you have ſinned againſt the Lord; and be ſure your Sin will find you out.* A Metaphor (Expoſitors ſay) taken from a Blood-hound, that follows the Thief by ſcent, and diſcovers him. Ah, Sinners, Guilt is a Blood-hound that will purſue you, and in time make a diſcovery
Pſal. 40. 12. of your Sins. *Mine iniquities* (ſays *David*) *take hold upon me, that I cannot look up*; as a Blood-hound lays hold upon the Thief, which hath ſtolen the Goods, or as an Hue and Cry follows the Malefactor, and apprehends him, upon which he confeſſes the Fact. It was ſaid to *Cain*, *If thou doſt well, ſhalt not thou be accepted? But if thou doſt ill,*

ill, Sin lieth at thy Door;—— *Lurks* as a Blood-hound, ready to flie upon the guilty Thief, as ſoon as he appears; and many times it lies there a long time together. Guilt lay at *David*'s Door three quarters of a Year. Conſidering *David* was a good Man, conſidering his Fact to be ſo deliberate as it was, it was a long time for ſuch an heinous piece of Guilt to ſleep in his Conſcience, whoſe Heart was once ſo tender, that it ſmote him for the cutting off of *Saul*'s Garment, his implacable Enemy. Conſcience may reckon with poor Souls after a long time: Chriſt may reckon with Souls many Years after. It is ſaid, *After a long time, the Lord of the Servants reckoned with them.* Mat. 25. 19.

them. Long forbearance; as we ſay, is no forgiveneſs.

So Conſcience may reckon with a Sinner, and God may reckon with a Sinner after a long time. It is true, God may keep ſilence, but yet (ſays he) *I will reprove thee, and ſet thy ſins in order before thee.* (viz.) *Thy Guilt ſhall come out, I will diſcover all.*

Pſal. 50. 21.

But before we proceed further, I ſhall premiſe theſe things:

1. Guilt may be hid from the World a long time, it may lie *incognito* a long time; the ſhame of many a Perſons nakedneſs may not appear for many a Year. Who can accuſe them? Many Murders have lain hid a long time together, that God hath brought to light afterwards. Hidden works

works of Darkneſs have been concealed long, as here Guilt for many years lay dormant. It is ſaid at *Paris*, There was a young Woman *Brain'd* with a Hammer: A *Smith* from whom the Hammer was ſtolen was ſuſpected, and tortured till he was Lame. But twenty Years after the Murderer was Arraigned, and Condemned for another Offence, and confeſſed this Murder. Twenty years Guilt was here hid. Many Inſtances might be given in our own Country, but I forbear.

2. Guilt may be hid from Conſcience a long time. Conſcience may be ſilent, ſtupid, and inſenſible a great while together. So was *David*: So were theſe Brethren of *Joſeph's*, ſeveral Years. This

is

is evident, until either God by his Word, or Rod, awaken Conſcience, and then it preaches cuttingly to the Soul of a guilty Sinner: Didſt not thou play the Wretch at ſuch a time? and was Drunk at ſuch a time? And didſt not thou commit Filthineſs at ſuch a time? O! Conſcience is a moſt faithful Recorder. Thy Sins may lie and lurk a great while in ſecret, yet they will ſpeak out one Day.

3. Some Mens Sins are not diſcovered, until the Re-
1 Tim. 5. 24. velation of the Great Day: Some Mens Sins go before-hand to Judgment, and ſome follow after. The Hypocriſy of the fooliſh Virgins was
1 Cor. 4 5. not diſcovered until Chriſt came. We reade of the hid-

den

den things of Darkneſs, then being made manifeſt: Then are the ſecrets of Hearts judged. Rom. 2. 16.

4. God, when he hath a deſign of Pardoning-Grace and Mercy upon a poor guilty Sinner, he will diſcover his Guilt. 1. Sometimes to the *World* to ſhame him, in order to humble him. And O *poor* Sinner! hadſt not thou better be ſhamed here in order to be humbled, than damned hereafter. Ah! many Sinners had gone on in Sin to the *far* end, (it may be as far as Hell) if God had not found them out and ſhamed them. 2. He always when he hath a deſign of Pardoning-Grace and Mercy, diſcovers hidden Guilt to the Soul it ſelf; he ſearches for it, and finds it out: *For the*

the Lord ſets before us even our ſecret ſins. Thus now he ſet the Conſciences of *Joſeph's* Brethren at work.

Now our *Work* will be to enquire into the *grounds* to *evince* this truth: That Sin and Guilt often walk in the Conſciences of Sinners, long after the Fact is committed. 1. Becauſe when the Fact is committed, the Conſcience is ſeared. We reade of ſeared Conſciences, a Metaphor taken from that part which is Cauterized by an hot Iron, and ſo made brawny and inſenſible. Alas poor Sinner! it may be Satan's Searing-Iron hath cauterized thy Conſcience, that at preſent it is paſt feeling (as we reade of ſome) and then the Sinner goes on merrily; queſtions nothing,

2 *Rim.* 4. 2.

Epheſ. 4. 16.

all

l is well with him, he is faſt leep, like *Jonah*, with all s Guilt upon him. But now e Day comes, that God hath deſign of Grace, it may be on him, or however a deſign of Glorifying himſelf; nd now he finds out a way awaken Conſcience, to ſet s Guilt before it: *I will ſet y Sins in order before thee.* Pſal. 50. 21. nd now the Conſcience beins to be tender, and relent, nd confeſs Sin, and ſay as ey in the Text: *Verily, we e guilty concerning our Broher.* O! now Sin begins to eigh heavy upon the Soul, nd the Sinner begins to be eſtleſs, being prickt in the eart. Now being prickt in e Conſcience, O! how it leeds!

2. Reaſon is, Becauſe when the

the Sin was committed, ct;
was in hot Blood (as we say app
O! many a poor Soul com urs,
mitteth that in hot Blood, Revi
repents of in cold. By h in
Blood (I mean) an Hurr ence
and heat of Temptation, ectr
in the hot blood of Passio alks,
Is not this hot Blood? In t at he
hot blood of Lust? Is n r D
this hot Blood? O! wh this
hot Blood was *David* in, whe an
he in Anger boiled so again ot,
Nabal! And what hot Blo nt
was he in, when he boyle ards
so in Lust against *Bathsheba* m to
But when in cold Blood, h d in
was another manner of Ma t fe
Men in cold Blood are con ran
derate, compos'd, and cal t i
in Spirits and Thoughts ey
Now the Guilty Sinner tak ome
himself to his second though lve
and, upon a review of th gain

Fact:

ct; O then Sin begins appear in its proper co-urs, and, as in *Paul's* phraſe, *Revives*, hath a *Reſurrecti-* in the guilty Man's Con-ience. And now as [a *pectrum*] it appears and alks, and haunts the Sinner at he cannot be quiet Night or Day. It is with Sinners this reſpect, as it is with a an in a Fight, that gets a ot, but, being warm, at pre-nt feels it not; but after-ards the loſs of Blood cauſes m to faint. Perſons enga-ed in their Temptations, do ot feel the fiery Darts, that an ſhoots at them. O! ut in cold Blood, how do ey cry out! When they ome to a feeling of them-lves, what they have done gainſt God, and againſt their Rom. 7. 9.

own

own Souls. Remember Si
ners, what you commit
your hot Blood, you will r
pent in your cold; and it w
walk in your Conſciences a
Prov. 28. 23. terwards: *He that rebuketh Man, afterwards ſhall find favour, more than he that flattereth with his Tongue* (ſa *Solomon*) *viz.* When a Ma is in cold Blood, compoſed his Spirit, then he conſide this friendly rebuke was Love.

3. Reaſon, Why Gui often walks in the Conſc ence after the Fact is com mitted, is, Becauſe the c ſtom of Sin takes away th conſcience of Sin. Cuſto in Sin is a very hardnin thing, when Sinners hav gotten habits of Sin; one being *Drunk*, another of bein

Unclean

clean, another of being Proud; now all ſence of Sin is loſt. *Can the* Ethiopian *change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots? No more can they that are accuſtomed to do evil, do good.* O! but now when the Lord muſters up the Sins of a poor guilty Wretch, in order to bring him to Repentance, then the Lord makes this Sin walk in his Conſcience, and the other Sin is brought to remembrance. O! now the Soul crys out, Men and Brethren, what ſhall I do? My Sin is ever before me. O how was *David* haunted with his guilt! How did it now walk in his Conſcience! Jer. 13.23.

4. Reaſon, Sinners are ignorant of the ſad effects and conſequences of Sin, until after-

afterwards. Alas, many times Sinners know not what they do when they commit Sin. 1. They know not what they do in sinning against God. *David* in his heat of Temptation did not consider it, until afterwards then he cried out, *Against thee, against thee only have I sinned.* The Prodigal did not know what he did, in the going from his Father; but afterwards how did he cry out, *I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight.* Now Guilt did walk in his Conscience. Now Sinners cry out with them in the Prophet, *For our Transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our Sins testifie against us, for our Transgressions are with us, and as for our Iniquities we*

Psal. 50. 4.

Luke 14. 21.

Isa. 59. 12.

know

know them. 2. Now the Eyes of the Sinner being opened, he ſees the ſad conſequences of Sin, that he hath ſinned againſt his own Soul. *He that ſinneth, wrongeth his own Soul.* Pro. 8.36. O now, what work is there in the Conſcience, when the poor Guilty Sinner ſees how he hath wronged his own Soul? yea, without Mercy from God, undone it for ever? nay, without Repentance, thou haſt not only wronged thy own Soul, but damned thy own Soul. O now the Sinner ſees the reward and wages of Sin is Death. The firſt Death, and the ſecond Death, Temporal Death, and Eternal Death; and now it begins to appear in its proper Colours; but alas this is not until afterwards.

5. Sin walks after the Fact committed, becauſe the aggravations of Sin ordinarily do not appear until afterwards. That which makes Sin ſtand up in the Conſcience of a Sinner, is the aggravation of Sin, which is laid before it uſually by Reflecting Acts; therefore the work of Repentance is ſet forth, by theſe Reflecting Acts: O, ſays the penitent Sinner, *What have I done?* Alas! a Sinner in an hour of Temptation, doth not take time to deliberate upon it, to look into the Aggravations of it; but all theſe come in as After-claps: Theſe are Conſcience's After-claps. Oh! what aggravations undoubtedly did appear in this caſe of their Guilt againſt their Bro-

Jer. 8. 6.

Brother *Joseph*! 1. They speak like Persons aggravating their Guilt. O now they cry out, *We are verily guilty concerning our Brother!* O now they see the aggravation of their Sin against their Brother, against the Law of Relation. To make a Slave of a Stranger, had been a great Sin; but to make a Slave of a Brother, this was an higher aggravation, and we find this consideration startled *Judah*, *Let not our hand be upon him, for he is our Brother.* This was a sin against the Law of Nature, and the Law of Relation, as well as the Law of Religion. 2. They have this aggravation of the matter of Fact, it was committed against Warning. Thus you see *Reuben* rubs them with it

Gen. 37. 26, 27.

Gen. 42. 22. in their diſtreſs: *Spake I not unto you, ſaying, do not ſin againſt the Child, and you would not hear? therefore, behold, his Blood is required.* O now (all comes out, as we ſay) to ſin againſt Warning, is a great aggravation: O now, ſays the guilty Conſcience once awakened, how fairly wert thou warned! nay, how frequently wert thou warned! O ſays Conſcience, did not I ſpeak to thee, and tell thee ſolemnly, thou ſhouldſt anſwer for it, and God would require it? 3. There was this aggravation in it, there was Theft, yea, the higheſt Theft in it; it was Man-ſtealing, (as *Joſeph* ſays himſelf) *I was ſtolen away out of the Land of the* Hebrews. Now this kind of Theft was puniſhable by death.

Gen. 40. 15.

death. *He that ſtealeth a Man and ſelleth him, ſhall ſurely be put to death.* And, O then what an aggravation of Sin was this, to ſell their own Brother! 4. There was this aggravation of Guilt ſtood up in their Conſciences, it was a deliberate Act, (as was hinted before) an Act of Counſel and Conſpiracy (the Text is expreſs in it) *And when they ſaw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conſpired againſt him to ſlay him.* And as they joyned in their Conſpiracy, now upon guilt walking in their Conſciences, they in my Text, joyn in their Confeſſion. O! ſo it is with Sinners, when Sin is laid home to the charge of Conſcience. O, but was it not a plotted

Exod. 21. 16.

Gen. 37. 18.

piece of Guilt, a contrived piece of Guilt, a deliberate Act: *David* tells us, he said, *He would confeſs his Sin, and* Pſal. 32.5. *God forgave the Iniquity of his Sin.* (*viz.*) The deliberateneſs of it; it may be he points at that particular aggravation. 5. Aggravation that ſtood up in the Conſciences of *Joſeph*'s Brethren, was their hiding of it; and this put themupon dreadful Lying and Diſſembling with their Father. *And we will ſay,* Gen. 37. 20. *Some evil Beaſt hath devoured him. This have we found, know whether it be thy Son's Coat or no.* O what dreadful work was here! This is the fruit of Sin, to cover and hide all with Lyes to their own Father. 6. Aggravation was there Cruelty, and Hard-

Hard-heartedneſs. The Text tells you, *They would not hear when he beſought them.* And now this cuts them to the Heart. So will Conſcience one day, ſay to the guilty Sinner: O! did not I beſeech thee to hearken to me! Did not I beſeech thee not to do this abominable thing which God hates! Did not I tell thee the ſad effects of it, but thou wouldſt not hear. 7. Aggravation, it was their envy to their Brother. They hated him becauſe of his Dream, of their Sheaves bowing to his; and now they ſee the fruit of this their Envy. O now, when the aggravations of Sin are ſet home by God upon the Conſcience, O then Sin appears (as the Apoſtle phraſes it)

to be exceeding ſinful. Sin appears as a walking Ghoſt, or *Spectrum*, that haunts the Soul.

Now I ſhall proceed to the improvement of this Practical Truth. Then, 1. It affords us this Inſtruction, that Sin leaves its ſting behind it. It may be the ſting of Sin doth not appear at firſt: It may ſeem to the Sinner to be an harmleſs thing, but it always leaves ſome thing behind it, that will torment the Soul at one time or another; and this (Sinners) is a thing called Guilt. There is a Worm that is bred by Sin; and this is a guilty Conſcience. And the Worm, O how terribly doth it gnaw! No Torment like the gnawing of a guilty Conſcience;

it is no leſs than an Hell on Earth; it is to be in Hell's flames before-hand. If you could ask *Cain*, he would tell you what a Torment an awakened guilty Conſcience is. If you could ask *Joſeph's* Brethren, they would tell you. If you could ask *Francis Spira*, he would tell you. If you could ask *Judas*, he would tell you, whether Sin after its commiſſion, doth not leave a ſting behind it. Nay, to come down to your latter Times, ask *Butler*, the penitent Murderer. Nay, ask *Savage*, and they will tell you, that Guilt walks in the Conſcience afterwards. O how hath this ſting of Guilt made many poor Souls cry out, and roar again. We all mourn like

Doves, and roar all like Bears: What was the mat-
Isa. 59.12. ter? *Their iniquities teſtified againſt them.* O what diſpair it hath brought many into! Therefore it was good Counſel of the Philoſopher, *Look not upon Pleaſure coming, but going.* And as he ſaid, when askt, ſo much for lying with a famous Harlot: *I will not buy Repentance at ſo dear a Rate.* O! Will! not ſuch Philoſophers ſhame thouſands of Chriſtians? O! What a dear bargain will your pleaſurable or profitable Luſts be to you, either here or hereafter?

2. Learn we hence, that though Conſcience be dumb and ſilent now, yet it will not always be ſo. It may be thy ſilent Conſcience is a

ſeared

ſeared Conſcience, but the day may come, as ſilent as it is now, it will open at thee; though it now be a ſleeping Lion, yet it may be a Roaring Lion. *Joſeph's* Brethren had their Conſciences ſilent many Years, twenty Years together, but now it ſpeaks to them, and charges their guilt home upon them; and they could not ſtand before the Charge and Indictment, but plead Guilty. *David's* Conſcience was ſtrangely benummed for three quarters of a Year together; as you have heard: But when it was awakened, O how it roared upon him! *I am feeble and ſore broken, I have roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs of mine heart.* Pſal. 38.8.

3. Learn we hence that the worſt is not paſt, becauſe Sin

Sin at preſent is not diſcovered. Many poor Sinners think, O! their guilt is ſo ſecret and concealed, that the World knows not of it; their Chriſtian Acquaintance know not of it; their near and dear Relations know not of it; by this they flatter themſelves, and think the worſt is paſt. O poor Sinners! conſider with your ſelves, God knows of it, and Conſcience knows of it, and it will and muſt come out ſooner or later: O then the worſt is to come, when Sin ſhall either be charged upon you by an awakened Conſcience, or by a Revenging God. Ah Sinners! What Hearts can endure, or what Hands can be made ſtrong in the

Ezek. 22. 14.

the day the Lord ſhall deal with you.

4. Learn hence, God is not only an Holy God, but an Omniſcient God; he is Holy, and by no means will he clear the Guilty. This is a piece of his Name: But he is alſo an Omniſcient God, knows where all the Sinners ſecret Guilt lies: *Our ſecret Sins are ſet before the Light of his Countenance.* Pſal. 90. 8. The Lord ſaw all this ſecret Guilt of *Joſeph*'s Brethren; it was (as is ſaid) laid up with him, and hid amongſt his Treaſures. Deut. 32. 33. What, poor Sinners! though your Relations ſee it not, nor the World ſee it not, yet God ſees it, Conſcience ſees it; you can do nothing out of the ſight of Conſcience.

5. Learn

5. Learn we hence the reaſon of that ſorrow thatmany times follows Sin, ſo that the Sinner knows not where to reſt. Thus *Butler*, the penitent Murderer. Thus poor *Savage*, whoſe Caſe was the greateſt Sermon ever preacht at *Ratcliff-Croſs*. The reaſon of this Sorrow is the guilt that ſticks in the Conſcience; this fills the Soul with Horrour and Sorrow. O now the Soul becomes a terrour to it ſelf, and it may be a terrour to all that are round about him. When you are tempted to Sin, O that you did but think this Sin will end in ſorrow! Will it not be bitterneſs in the latter end? O how would this tend to the breaking of the power of a Temptation!

The

The 2*d*. Improvement of the Truth, is by way of Caution. If Sin leave Guilt behind, O then take heed of Sin! Then poor Sinners, this may well be a Sermon to you againſt Sin. O then, 1. Take heed of Sins that make deep Wounds in the Conſcience, ſuch Sins as do (*Vaſtare Conſcientiam*) make havock of Conſcience, ſins againſt Light, againſt the Light of Nature; as thy own *Conſcience* will accuſe thee of, if thou didſt not ſit under the Light of the Goſpel. *Joſeph's* Brethrens was ſuch a Sin; *David's* was ſuch a Sin: And, O how did it thereforebreak his Bones! What are your ſecret Drunkenneſſes, Uncleanneſs, your ſecret Night-haunts, will they not all come out one day, and be brought

brought to light? Are they not ſins againſt Light? Yea, againſt the Light of Nature? Could you ſin without controul of Conſcience, if you did not put your Finger in the Eye of Nature?

2. Take heed then of ſecret Sins alſo, be they never ſo hidden, they will walk in your Conſciences another day. Take heed of the works of Darkneſs, they will come to light. Did *Joſeph*'s Brethren think when they ſold their Brother, it would have come out thus? Let not Satan, and your own Hearts flatter you, to think your ſins will always be hid, becauſe at preſent they are ſo.

3. Take heed of being hardened in ſins. Becauſe God ſeems by his Providence to wink

ink at it: Many do ſo. *Be-* Pſal. 50.
uſe (ſays God) *I kept ſi-* 22.
nce, thou thoughtſt I was al-
gether like thy ſelf. Like
oſe, that *Becauſe Sentence* Eccleſ. 8.
as not ſpeedily executed, their 11.
arts were fully ſet in them to
oil. Whereas they ſhould
ake this uſe of it: God's for-
earance is to be the ſpace of
y Repentance.

4. Take heed of flattering
our ſelves, that your Sins
ill never come out all, be-
auſe they have been a long
ime hid. You ſee to the
ontrary: Many have come
t laſt to condign Puniſhment
or long hidden and conceal-
ed Iniquities. It may be,
inner, God's time is not yet
come, to make a diſcovery
of thy Wickedneſs. It may
be thou art not ripe enough

in

in Sin. It may be the Lor
is all this while letting the
alone to fill up thy Measure
It may be thy *impunity* fro
Temporal Judgments, is th
Spiritual Judgment. God i
his wrath threatens some, *Th*
he will not punish their
Hos. 4. 14. *and Daughters, when they com*
mit Adultery. Sinners, yo
think it a brave thing fo
God to let you alone in you
Sin, and spare you: And alas
all this he may do in the hot
test Wrath and Displeasure.

5. Take heed of sinful ex
cusing and covering your Sin
Prov. 28. 13. *He that covereth his Sin sha*
not prosper, but he that con
fesseth and forsaketh his Si
shall find Mercy. O! now *Jo*
seph's Brethren do not excuse
and cover their Sin. O! now
conscience is awakned & they
plead

lead guilty with one consent.

III. The next improvement of the Truth, is this, A word of Counsel and Exhortation: Then let us all stand clear of Sin, if it leave a Sting behind it; O! then stand in awe, and sin not. O say this with *Joseph*, in the case of his Mistress: *How can* Gen. 39.9. *I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?*

1. Stand clear of Sin, it leaves that behind, will torment you. Alas, poor Sinners, they consult at present only the pleasure of Sin, only the satisfaction of a present Lust, and the profit of Sin, but they do not consider the guilt of Sin. Did the Thief consider, O! but this sin will leave a Sting behind it, and it will expose him

him to the danger of t
Law, it will end in *Tybur*
O! how this would awe a
check him: ſo did but S
ners argue with themſelv
O this wicked Trade of mi
this ſinful Courſe of mi
what will it end in? Will
not end in Hell? Doth
not expoſe me to the wra
of a Righteous God? C
would not ſuch a conſider
tion cool the boyling he
of many a Sinner's Luſt?
is the miſery of Sinners, th
look not to an afterward
but only at preſent conſu
either their Pleaſure or the
Profit.

2. Stand clear of Sin, f
it will be very terrible to yo
when it ſhall haunt you
Conſciences. There is n
ſuch terrible *Spectrum* in th
Worl

orld, as the walking of pardoned Sin in the Conence. O what horrour and azement did this Sin of *Joh*'s Brethren make in their onſciences! And O, what ad caſe was *David* in, when ſaid, *My Sin is ever be-e me!* As if he had ſeen me *Spectrum*, or Apparitin haunting him. You would ot live in an haunted Houſe, nd yet how many Sinners ve with haunted Conſcienes? They are *Magor-miſſabib*, Terrours to themſelves, ea, and to thoſe that ſtand bout them. O! how did *Judas*'s guilt haunt him? And *Spira* his guilt haunt im?

3. Stand off from Sin, for ne Sin will beget another. Thus did the Sin of *Joſeph*'s Brethren,

Brethren, they now muſt c
ver it with his Coat, they no
muſt lye to their aged Fathe
and ſay, an evil Beaſt hath d
voured him. O! where wi
Sin have an end! Sinner
you know the beginning
Sin, but who knows the en
thereof? Who knows whe
Sin will ſtop? Sinners, yo
know not what you do, whe
you meddle with Sin. Sin'
chain hath many Links, an
they all depend one upon an
other. And I muſt tell you
one Sin is ſo cloſe linkt to an
other, that they lead one t
another. Thieving leads t
Lying, Lying to Denying
with Appeals to God, and ſ
on to Swearing, and from
Swearing on to Hardning.

4. Stand clear of Sin, for
God will viſit your Sin upon

ou ſooner or later. Though it as long firſt, yet you ſee od puniſhes this Sin of *Jo-ph's* Brethren; now God as viſiting for it. O (Sirs) e viſiting of God for Sin, is terrible thing! Do you not ear the Lord ſay, *Shall I not iſit for theſe things?* O poor inners! though God let ou alone at preſent, yet the ears of your Viſitation ſhall ome. Jer. 5.9.

5. Stand clear of Sin, there s a worſe thing than all this ollows it, (*viz.*) Wrath to ome. O, may it not be ſaid o any one of you, nay, to very one of you, as was aid to her, *Go your ways, ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come unto you.* A worſe thing? O, what can that be? Wrath o come, Hell and eternal John 5.14.

Tor-

Torments, the Worm th
never dies, the Fire that n
ver goes out.

Second Counſel is to ſtan
clear of ſecret Guilt, the mo
covert Guilt whatſoeve
This Sin of *Joſeph*'s Brethre
was a covered Sin for man
years together. This is
that tempts many a poor So
to ſin. Who ſeeth it? Wh
knoweth it? It ſhall neve
come to light: All will b
wrapt up in clean Linne
and reſt in darkneſs and ſ
lence all my days. And u
on this very account, man
poor Souls, they fall into th
Snares, becauſe laid in th
dark and ſecret for them.

1. Conſider poor Sinner
God looks on when you com
mit ſecret Sins, there is n
thing hid from him. He

all Eye: He is an Omniſcient God. O poor Sinner! Didſt but thou think God looks on, O how would this ſtartle thee in the act of Sin! Shall the Eye of Men make Sinners afraid, and ſhall not the Eye of God much more? Would *Joſeph*'s Brethren thus ſecretly and perfidiouſly have ſold their Brother, if they had conſidered God ſaw them at the Bargain making, if they had conſidered God looked on?

2. Poor Sinners, ſtand off from ſecret Sins, for the eye of Conſcience looks on; and Conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes. Conſcience in *Joſeph*'s Brethren, could very well remember their Guilt. O (Sirs) Conſcience hath a ſtrange Memory. O if a

Sinner did but ſolemnly de
bate the Matter with himſelf
and ſay, O, but if I commi
this ſin never ſo ſecretly, m
Conſcience is Witneſs, an
will tell me of it anothe
day, and gripe me for it ano
ther day. O how woul
theſe thoughts be an Impedi
ment in the way of many
Sinner!

3. Poor ſinners, ſtand o
from ſecret ſins, for ſecre
ſins have many times ſtrange
Eccleſ. 10. 20. ly come to light: *A Bird o
the Air ſhall tell the Matte*
(ſays *Solomon*); *viz.* Sin ſha
be diſcovered by improbab
and unlikely means. W
reade of others, that Heave
ſhall reveal their Iniquit
Job 20.27. *The Heaven ſhall reveal h
iniquity, and the Earth ſha
riſe up againſt him.* Rathe
tha

than it ſhall be hid, Heaven and Earth ſhall conſpire to bring it to light. God hath of late given us notable Inſtances, in deceiving wicked Mens Plots and Projects againſt theſe poor Nations.

4. Stand off from ſecret Sins. They are moſt dangerous, becauſe they go a great while undiſcovered, and the concealment of them often is an occaſion of being hardned in them, and putting off Repentance for them. God often makes uſe of Shame upon diſcovery of ſome ſecret Sin, to be a means to lead to Repentance.

5. The longer Guilt lies hid, the louder will it roar in the Conſcience when diſcovered; thus you ſee it did with *Joſeph*'s Brethren. O,

now their guilty Conſciences roar upon them, though it had been hid ſo long. O, what work will Sin make in thy Conſcience, when it ſhall walk there after thou thoughtſt it had been buried twenty or thirty years! O then, who would not ſtand off from ſecret Sins!

Third word of Counſel, O then repent of ſin, if guilt ſtay behind after the Fact be committed. Is it not then high time that your ſin ſhould be blotted out upon your Repentance? I muſt tell you, Sinners, the guilt of ſin is upon your Conſciences, until your Repentance. You lie under Guilt, if it be twenty years after. What though you have eſcaped the Revenging Hands of God hitherto,

yet

yet the Guilt is upon you, and that binds you; therefore you see, Repentance and Remission of Sin goes together. O poor Sinners, until you sincerely Repent, all your Guilt is upon you: Yea, it is marked before the Lord, and O how sad is this to have the guilt of all thy Sins that thou hast committed to this very day, upon the back of thy Soul!

Fourth word of Counsel. O then flie to the Blood of Christ! Guilt will walk in your Consciences when once awakened, until the Blood of Christ be sprinkled upon them: Until you by an eye of Faith, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the Sins of the World. What though Guilt hath laid long

upon you? What though the Sin be of old ſtanding, yet the Blood of Chriſt takes it away. It cleanſes from all Sin, new or old, great or ſmall, Inormities or Infirmities; ſins againſt Light, or ſins againſt Love. O then come, Sinners, come to the Blood of Sprinkling.

Heb. 12. 24.

Fifth word of Counſel is, O then do not lie long in your Guilt! To fall into Sin is dangerous, but to lie long when fallen is much more dangerous. Theſe Brethren of *Joſeph*'s laid long in their Sin and Guilt. O poor Sinners, when you fall by Sin, make haſte to get up by Repentance.

1. What if you ſhould be hardned in Guilt? and do you not run the hazard of being

ing hardned in Sin when you lie in it? It may be before you commit it, you think you may repent of it when you will; but alas, you may ſoon be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of Sin. Dr. *Preſton*, ſpeaking of the deceitfulneſs of Sin, *O*, ſays he, *Sin in the firſt temptation to the Sinner ſeems little; commit but this once, and thou mayſt afterwards repent of it, and thou needeſt never commit this Sin again. But alas* (ſays he) *every Sin committed leaves the Spawn of another Sin upon the Soul, and after once, the Soul is eaſily led into another Act, until it be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of Sin.*

2. What if you die in it? You may lie in it, and die in it. O, what if God ſay ſuch

a word to you in your Guilt unrepented of, as he did to thoſe *Jews*, *You ſhall die in your Sins*—? O, is not this a dreadful thing to die in Sin! You think it ſad to die in Debt to Men; what is it then to die in Sin, which is debt to God, with all your ſins upon the back of your Souls? What, if thou dieſt an unpardoned Sinner, art thou not damned if thou hadſt ten thouſand Souls? And, O what a venture doſt thou run that lieſt in Sin!

3. O do not lie in Sin. The longer it is laid in, the harder it will be to repent of: The longer a Sinner lies in his Fall, the harder he is to Riſe. As the larger a Diſeaſe is upon a Perſon, the more difficult is the Cure. A Man feels

feels not at first when he lies upon the Ground, but if he lies a while, he grows stiff, and can very hardly rise. Thus it will be with a Soul that lies long in Sin: O then repent speedily of Sin.

GEN. xlii. 21.

Therefore is this Distress come upon us.

WE are now come to the second part of the Text, (*viz.*) The Reflection, or Accusation of *Joseph*'s Brethren, their Consciences now being awakened by their Affliction, they now jointly draw up this Conclusion and Indictment against themselves: O, *Therefore is this Distress come upon us.* D 5 1. We

1. We have the Reflection it self. O how quick was Conscience now! What quick work sometimes doth sence of Guilt make? O now they cry out with an Asseveration, *Verily we are guilty*, &c.

2. We have the occasion of this Reflection, (*viz.*) *Their present Distress.* Now they were under Affliction. (For their being all this while in the hand of *Joseph* was an unknown Business to them). Their distress and strait was great, and now they as one Man conclude for their guilt, *this Distress was come upon them.*

The Truth the Text presents us with, is this: *In a day of Affliction, Con-*

Conſcience is very quick and active in its Reflections.

This is a profitable Truth, and worth inquiring into, ſuch Days as theſe, when ſo many are hardned in their ſins. Poor Sinners ruffle it out, and ſtout it out againſt God in a a day of Proſperity. O who but they! with *Pharaoh*, ſaying, *Who is the Lord?* Thus he ſwaggers it out: but ſtay until an Hand of God be upon him, and then you will find him of another mind; O then, Send for *Moſes* to pray for me! Then he confeſſes, *I and my People are wicked.* Thus the Prophet *Jeremiah* makes the wild Aſs an Emblem (and that very fitly) of a wicked Man in his proſperous

ſperous condition, running on in Sin: *As the wild Aſs* Jer. 2. 24. *ſnuffs up the Wind at her pleaſure.* All Counſel, all Inſtruction, all Advice is loſt: All that ſeek her, do but weary themſelves. But ſtay until her Months of Affliction and Diſtreſs come, and then they may be ſpoken with. In their Months one ſhall find them. O now Conſcience begins to talk with them, and call them to a ſerious debate concerning their paſt lives and Tranſactions, God often ſets Conſcience to diſcourſe with Sinners, in the day of their Diſtreſs. We have plentiful Inſtances of this Truth in holy Writ. You may find it proved of the worſt of Men, as well as of God's own People. The caſe of

Gain,

Cain, what a quick Reflection was that of his, *All that meet me will ſlay me.* His ſin and guilt walked in his Conſcience. *Abel*'s Ghoſt (as I may ſay) he haunted *Cain*'s Conſcience. Alas! Who was in the World to ſlay him? It was only the concluſion of his guilty Conſcience. *Ahab* had ſinned highly againſt the Lord, he was a Non-ſuch for a Sinner. *There was none like unto* Ahab, *which did ſet himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of God.* Yet when this poor Wretch came to hear of God's Threatnings, how quick was Conſcience in making Reflections upon him, he humbled himſelf before the Lord. *Manaſſeh* for all his Abominations, when God brought him into the

1 King. 21. 24.

Briars,

Briars, then Conſcience fell to work; O now *Manaſſeh* came to know the Lord! O now he humbled himſelf! How ordinary is this? How many wicked Men ſometimes upon a ſuppoſed Death-bed, ſometimes upon a real Death-bed, have confeſſed that guilt which hath laid dormant in their Conſciences a very long time? How have they had all their Sins ſet in order before their Eyes? O how have all their former committed Wickedneſſes (though never ſo ſecret) taken hold of them!

Now for the Proof of it; as to the Godly in particular, they contribute witneſs abundantly to this Truth; therefore when we find them under the Hand of God, what con-

confeſſion do they make to God? What ſupplications do they pour out to God at ſuch times? How do they mourn like Doves? and, as the Church ſaith, roar like Bears, accuſing themſelves now in a day of Diſtreſs: *As for our Iniquities, they teſtifie againſt us*, &c. It is ſaid of *Iſrael, That God ſlew the fatteſt of them, and ſmote the choſen Men of* Iſrael. O, what did they then in this ſad day? *Then they returned to the Lord.* But alas, all this was but while the Affliction was upon them. *David*, when under Affliction, O how he Reflects, *There was no reſt in his Bones, becauſe of God's Anger, and his Sin.* And *Jonah*, guilty *Jonah!* when God had found him out, how quick was Conſcience

Iſa. 59. 12, 13.

Pſal. 78. 31, 34.

science with him? *For my sake is this evil come upon you: Cast me over-board.* He acknowledges himself to be the Storm-breeder.

Now, *First*, We shall enquire what a Reflection of Conscience is.

Secondly, What Conscience doth Reflect upon in a day of Distress.

Thirdly, What kind of Reflections these reflections of guilty Consciences are.

Fourthly, Why Conscience is so quick with Sinners, in a day of Affliction and Distress.

Fifthly, We shall improve all by way of Application.

First, What a Reflection of Conscience is. Here we must

nuſt enquire what Conſcience
. We reade often of it in
cripture: *Having our Hearts* Heb. 10.
prinkled from an evil Conſci- 22.
nce. And of Conſciences pur- Heb. 9.14.
ed from dead Works, to ſerve
he Living God. I will not
rouble you with any Nicity
bout Conſcience, becauſe
he Truth is purely practical.
t is indeed diſputed, whether
Conſcience be a Power, or
n Habit, or an Act only.
ome of late have called it an
nſtinct, or a Principle in Man
mpreſſing upon his Mind a
uture Judgment. Or an Ha-
bit, a Natural Habit. [An
Habit] becauſe it was at firſt
n Adventitious Impreſſion.
[Natural] becauſe now it is
Original, and tranſmitted in
he ſame way as other Natu-
al Qualities, (thus one up-
on

Dr. *Barthog* in his *Cauſa Dei* pag. 404.

on it). But I will apply my-
ſelf to thoſe things that have
no perplexity in them to un-
derſtand.

Conſcience is a very buſie
faculty in the Soul of Man,
or a Practick and Reflexive
Power of the Mind; and its
Operations are theſe.

1. It takes notice of Mens
Actions, what we do we do
under the Eye of Conſcience.
A Heathen could ſay, *It is
God's Regiſter, and a ſtrict Ob-
ſerver of our ways.*

2. It doth teſtifie either
with us, or againſt us; ſo it
acts the part of a Witneſs.
And ſo it is ſaid to Excuſe,
Rom. 2. 15. or Accuſe. It ſpeaks ſome-
times for poor Souls; this is
2 Cor. 1. 12. our rejoycing, the teſtimo-
ny of our Conſciences. It
doth ſometimes Accuſe. Thus
it

did in *Joseph's* Brethren, hen they cried out of their Guilt.

3. It doth torment. O what orment like that of a griping uilty Conſcience! How did *ain's* Conſcience torment im? and *Judas* his Conſcience torment him? How did *pira* his Conſcience torment im? This is a piece of Hells Torments begun here. his Conſcience in Men, is udge, Witneſs, and Executioner.

Now we muſt underſtand, here is a two-fold Conſcience.

1. A ſeared Conſcience, *Having their Conſciences ſeared with an hot Iron:* Cauterized (as hath been hinted before) whereby it is made brawny nd inſenſible. Now while thus, 1 Tim. 4. 2.

thus, it is not a Reflecting Conſcience. Here is no walking Guilt, though abundance of dormant and ſleepy Guilt. And for the preſent, had no *Joſeph*'s Brethren ſeared Conſciences, when they did ſit down to eat after ſuch a Fact as caſting their Brother into the Pit: *And they took him and caſt him into a Pit: and the Pit was empty, there was no Water in it. And they ſat down to eat Bread*, &c. Here was little Senſe upon them, no Reflection yet upon them.

Gen. 37. 25.

2. There is a ſoft and tender Conſcience, and this is the Conſcience that makes Reflections: Conſcience is awakened before it be thus ſoftned. It muſt know it hath done evil, before it ſay, What have I done? *David's*

Con-

Conſcience was thus tender, when it ſmote him for cutting off the Lap of *Saul*'s Garment.

Now for the better underſtanding, what is meant by theſe Reflections of Conſcience, we muſt inquire by what Expreſſions the Scripture ſets them out.

1. Reflections of Conſcience are ſet forth by Conviction. We reade of them that brought the Woman to Chriſt taken in Adultery: *They were convicted in their Conſciences, they went out one by one.*— It is a Law-term, *The Priſoner ſtands Convict.* Now theſe Perſons applied Guilt to themſelves, *They were guilty in their Conſciences.* Thus *Joſeph*'s Brethren were guilty, and cried out as Men con- John 8. 9.

convict in their own Consc
ences. Convictions (say
one) is the light of the Un
derstanding reflecting upo
the Guilt discovered to i
whereby it makes a deep im
pression upon the Spirit. S
that one piece of Reflection
consists in conviction
Guilt.

2. Another expression se
ting forth the Reflections
guilty Consciences, is
wounded Spirit: It is now
wounded Conscience. No
Joseph's Brethren were woun
Prov. 18. 14. ded in their Consciences:
wounded Spirit, who can bea
or lift up (as some reade it)
A Metaphor taken from Bo
dily Wounds. O, how wi
a Wound smart and throb
So doth Guilt in an awake
ned Sinners Conscience whe

it makes Reflections, O! now it is pained under the ſenſe of Guilt. Thus *David*, *My Wounds ſtink, and are corrupt.* Pſal. 38. 5.

3. Another expreſſion ſetting forth the Reflections of guilty Conſciences, is the reproaching of Conſcience: *My Heart ſhall not upbraid me, as long as I live, (or from my days).* Concerning my manner of Living, my Heart ſhall take no ſhame from my Days (ſays Mr. *Broughton*). *Viz.* From thoſe things I have done in my Days, or from my whole Converſation. He had lived in good Conſcience before God and Man: But now when Conſcience reflects upon a Man under ſenſe of Guilt, it reproaches him, it upbraids him, it is always chiding him. Job 27. 6. Acts 23. 1.

4. Ano-

4. Another expreſſion ſet ting forth the Reflections o guilty Conſciences, is, Th Conſcience ſmiting him. A *David* his Heart ſmote hi when he cut off the Lap o *Saul*'s Garment. Tende Conſciences find this inwar ſmiting, either upon th commiſſion of Evil, or th omiſſion of Good. Ah! no how did *Joſeph*'s Brethren' Conſciences ſmite them? I is ſet forth by the poor Pub lican ſmiting on his Breſt And ſometimes with *E phraim*'s ſmiting upon hi Thigh. O, now Sinners re flect upon their Sins, as tha word, *No Man repented, an ſaid, what have I done?*

5. It is ſet forth by bring ing again to mind, which i the proper notion of Reflecti

on

on: *Remember, and ſhew your ſelves Men: and bring it again to mind, O ye Tranſgreſſors.* Therefore we have frequently ſuch Expreſſions. *Remembring their evil ways: and if my People ſhall bethink themſelves.* Theſe are properly the Reflex Acts of the Mind and Conſcience. Iſa. 46. 8. 1 Kings 8. 47.

6. It is ſet forth by Accuſing: The Conſcience draws up an Accuſation againſt the Sinner, as here *Joſeph*'s Brethren did: it Reflects when it Accuſes. We reade of the *Gentiles*, who only had the Law of Nature, and yet their Conſciences did accuſe them.

7. It is ſet forth by Condemning, which is higher than Accuſing; it paſſes Judgment, as well as it witneſſes:

1 John 3. 20. neſſes: *If our own Hearts condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts*, (viz.) *our Conſciences*. We may ſpell out of all theſe, ſome things of the nature of Reflection of Conſcience.

Second Inquiry is, What this awakened Conſcience reflects upon. For we muſt underſtand that Conſcience doth never bear falſe Witneſs, for in this caſe the voice of Conſcience is the Voice God. Conſcience's Teſtimony holds true in the caſe of *Joſeph*'s Brethren.

1. Conſcience in a day of Affliction, reflects upon matters of Fact. It may be at the preſent commiſſion of the Sin, the Sinner takes no notice of it; in an hurry and huff of Temptation, all is for-

forgotten. O! but there is a Book of Remembrance that Conſcience keeps, and all your Sins are regiſtred there; and though it be a ſealed Book at preſent, you know not how ſoon it may be opened, and you judged out of it, according to what you have done. O, how many Sinners may now deny matter of fact, but when Conſcience ſhall be awakened to lay it home, and charge them plainly with it (ſaying as *Nathan* to *David*) *Thou art the Man:* then there will be no denying of it. The witneſs of mes own Conſcience, is an undeniable Teſtimony. *Cain* could not deny this Teſtimony, therefore his Guilt cri'd, *All that meet me will ſlay me.* *Pharaoh* could not deny this

Teſtimony, *I and my People are wicked.* *Judas* could not deny this Teſtimony, *I have ſinned in betraying innocent Blood.* The People of God could not deny this Teſtimony, when they cried out *Our Iniquities teſtifie against us*, &c.

2. Conſcience doth not only reflect upon matter of Fact, but upon Circumſtances and Aggravations of the Fact, Conſcience when awakened becomes tender, and calls every particular Circumſtance to remembrance that did heighten, or any way aggravate the matter and thus did they in the Text: Wherein lay the aggravation of the Guilt? You have heard hinted before [*that we ſaw the anguiſh of his*

Soul, and he beſought us, yet we would not hear].

1. They ſaw the anguiſh of his Soul, and yet their Eyes did not affect their Hearts.

2. It was their Brother too.

3. He beſought us.

4. They would not hear. All of them great Aggravations. Saw it. The anguiſh of a Brothers Soul. A beſeeching Brother, and would not hear. Deafned their Ears to his lamentable Cries. O, how do their Conſciences Reflect upon all theſe!

There are ſeveral things that Conſcience when awakened, reflects upon, with reference to the Circumſtances of matter of Fact.

1. Sometimes Conſcience

tells the Sinner, it is against Light: Thou hadst so much Light as to conceive this before commission, that it was a Sin, that it was a Violation and Transgression of an holy Law; and says Conscience, this thou knewest, yea, this thou knewest beforehand, and yet contrary to the discovery of this Light, thou didst run violently into it, and rebelledst against the Light (as *Job*'s phrase is). Job 24.13.

2. Sometimes Conscience tells the Sinner, he hath sinned against Resolutions; and this is an aggravating Circumstance. O how often (says Conscience) hast thou broken thy serious Purposes and Vows, when it may be you have been in imminent dangers and distresses. Now Con-

Conſcience regiſters and records the very Reſolutions of poor Sinners, it being privy to all the ſecret Purpoſes. When ſome of you are at Sea, ready to be ſwallowed up of the Belly of Hell (as *Jonah* phraſes it) O then you pray to God, and purpoſe againſt Sin, if God will bring you off with your Lives at this time. Or, it may be, others of you at Land, upon a ſuppoſed Death-bed, O, if God will ſpare you, How do you reſolve againſt Sin, yea, againſt thoſe Sins that ſting your Conſciences moſt? But alas, after all this, do not you break your Bonds? Now Conſcience books all, and at one time or other, will remember you of all theſe things.

3. Sometimes Conſcience in its Reflections, tells the Sinner of ſinning againſt its Warnings and Dictates. To ſin againſt the dictates of Conſcience, is a very great Aggravation. O Sinners! how often hath Conſcience warned you? As you love your Peace, as you love your Souls, as you will anſwer it at the great Tribunal of God, that you go not on in ſuch a Courſe, or that you commit not ſuch a Sin at your Peril (ſays Conſcience): but notwithſtanding all this, the Sinner blunders on. I tell you Sinners (from the Lord) there is never a Warning an awakened Conſcience hath given any of you, but it will riſe up againſt you another Day;

Day; either here or, hereafter.

4. Sometimes Conſcience in its Reflections, tells Sinners of their ſinning againſt its Reproofs; which is an aggravating Circumſtance. To run into Sin after long reproved, hence you have that terrible word, *He that being often reproved, hardens his Heart, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.* O, ſays Conſcience, is not this thy Caſe? Haſt thou not often been reproved? Have not I often reproved thee, and God often reproved thee? and Miniſters often reproved thee? Yet haſt thou gone on, &c. And will not every Reproof walk in your Conſciences another day, that you ſin againſt now? Prov. 28. 1.

5. Sometimes Conſcience in its Reflections, tells Sinners of ſinning againſt Mercy, which is another aggravating Circumſtance. How many Mercies (ſays Conſcience) have you ſinned againſt? ſparing Mercy at Sea, and at Land? preventing Mercy, preſerving Mercy? O what a life of Mercy hath thy Life ſeen! Nothing but a Series of Mercy, a large Tract of Mercy, a Line of Mercy, and yet thou haſt ſinned againſt all. This will grieve thee another Day, when thou ſhalt have all thy Mercies as well as Sins, ſet in order before thee.

Thirdly, Conſcience reflects upon the diſhonour Sin brings to God, as well as upon the Fact, and the circumſtances

ſtances of the Fact. When Conſcience begins to be enlightned and awakened, O then it begins to think what diſhonour Sin hath brought upon God; for as Sin brings guilt upon the Soul, ſo it brings diſhonour upon the Name of God. And thus *David*'s Conſcience reflects, *Againſt thee, againſt thee have I ſinned*; this laid uppermoſt on the Heart of *David*. He ſinned againſt his Soul, he ſinned againſt his own Body, he ſinned againſt *Bathſheba*, he ſinned againſt the whole Church of God; but of all (ſays he) *Againſt Thee, againſt Thee have I ſinned*. O, ſays Conſcience to the Sinner, how haſt thou opened the Mouths of the Enemies of God and his People, to blaſpheme!

blaſpheme? and cauſed the Ways of God to be evil ſpoken of? Thou haſt wounded and ſtabb'd the Honourable and Bleſſed Name of God: and ſhould not the Honour of that God that created thee be dear to thee? who hath preſerved thee in a thouſand Dangers, and hath provided for thee in a thouſand Wants, ſhould not his Honour lie near thy Heart? Did not this make *Joſeph* ſay, *How can I do this Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?*

Fourthly, Conſcience when awakened reflects upon Times and junctures of Time, in which Perſons have ſinned. There is a great deal in the Time of Sin, as well as the Act of Sin, to reflect upon. Therefore it was taken notice

of

of in that black Brand upon *Ahaz: This is that King* Ahaz *that ſinned more and more, in the time of his Diſtreſs.* O what a monſtrous thing was it to ſin then? There are three Times that Conſcience takes ſpecial notice to reflect upon, when we ſin in them. 2 Chron. 28. 22.

1. A time of common Calamity, when God's Judgments are abroad. To ſin when God is ſmiting for Sin, when God ſmites on, and Sinners they ſin on, *They returned not unto the Lord that ſmote them.* O now, cries Conſcience, did not you commit ſuch a Sin in the time of the Plague? in the time of the Fire? How durſt you ſin when God's Sword was drawn, and ſheathed in the

the Bowels of ſo many thouſand Sinners? This was to ſin when the Judge was upon the Bench. And while he was paſſing Sentence againſt poor guilty Malefactors, and O what impudence was this in Sinners!

2. A time of Perſonal Affliction. This is a Juncture of Time for an awakened Conſcience to reflect upon, and tell you of, when any of you have laid under the Hands of God; and what! then to lift up your Heel againſt God? This is not only Sinning, but daring Sin, and Conſcience takes notice that that was your Sinning Time, which ſhould have been your Humbling Time for Sin.

3. A Time of receiving eminent and particular Mercies

cies from God, then to Sin againſt God; O! how will Conſcience take its opportunity and tell you of it another Day? For *Hezekiah* to ſin againſt God, when God had ſo lately raiſed him up, and recovered him from a Sentence of Death: O what will Conſcience ſay to this, when *Hezekiah* comes to be humbled for it? What! for *David* to ſin after God had brought him through all his Dangers and Difficulties, and put him in poſſeſſion of the Kingdom, for him to ſay, *Thou haſt made my Mountain ſtrong, and I ſhall not be moved;* O how will *David*'s Conſcience reflect upon this another Day!

4. When God hath graciouſly viſited the Soul, with ſmiles

ſmiles of his Love, then to ſin, Conſcience will be ſure to reflect upon this. To return to Folly after God hath ſpoken Peace, O! how will Conſcience tell thee of this another Day, and tell thee what Diſingenuity and Ingratitude there was in it. Is this a time to ſin? Is not this like a fooliſh People, to requite the Lord with evil, for ſo much Good as you have received from him?

5. To ſin after thou haſt humbled thy ſelf for Sin, this is a time Conſcience will Reflect upon. What will Conſcience ſay to theſe things? Is this thou that lately wert upon thy Knees, bemoaning thy Sin before the Lord? What, thou who haſt ſo lately confeſſed and acknowledged

ed thy Sin, and now running into Sin, yea, into the ſame Sins you have mourned over, and repented of? O! how will Conſcience ſadly animadvert upon theſe things, in the day of its dealing with you, poor Sinners!

Fifthly, Conſcience when awakened, will Reflect upon loſt means and ſeaſons of Grace. Chriſt conſidered this, when he preached that doleful Sermon to *Jeruſalem*: O! *that thou hadſt known in this thy day, the things that concern thy Peace.* Luke 19. 29. He knew it would cut to the Conſcience to tell them of loſt Seaſons, and loſt Advantages for Heaven and Eternity. And indeed this makes up much of the Torments of Hell. Theſe Reflections upon the laſt

laſt motions of the Spirit, laſt convictions of Conſcience, laſt Sermons, Ordinances, and Sabbaths. Nay, when God comes to awaken Conſcience, how doth it reflect upon theſe things in this preſent Life? As one ſaid when a Miniſter came to comfort her, *Call Time again, call Time again.* Implying, ſhe thought it was as impoſſible to apply Comfort to her, as to call time again. So, poor Sinners, how ſad will this be for you another Day, to cry, Call Sabbaths again, Miniſtry again, a day of Grace again, motions of the Spirit again. Alas (Sirs) now you think theſe things may be dallied and trifled with, and it is indifferent whether you lay hold of ſuch opportunities to im-

prove

prove them, or no. O, but when they are gone, how will theſe things ſting? A Man who hath been under good opportunities to arrive at a great Eſtate in the World, and when he is brought by his bad Husbandry and Prodigality, to Penury and Poverty, O! how doth he then Reflect upon himſelf (if he be ſenſible) and upon his fair Opportunities that now are paſt recalling. O then, what a Mad-man was I? What fair Opportunities have I loſt? Thus it is in this Caſe with Guilty Conſciences, when awakened. O, what a fair way was I once in for Heaven, and eternal Life! What Seaſons had I to enrich my Soul in Grace? O! what a Fool was I, that had ſo many

ny Prizes put into my Hand, and had not an Heart to make uſe of them! theſe will be ſad Reflections.

Sixtly, An awakened Conſcience will Reflect in a day of Affliction, upon the ſad Effects and Conſequences of Sin; what Sin brings along with it, what follows and treads upon the Heels of it.

1. Sad effect of Sin Conſcience reflects upon, is God's diſpleaſure. O! who can bear it? Angels could not it caſt them out of Heaven. *Adam* could not, it caſt him out of Paradice: He drove out the Man. Nay, the moſt holy Servants of God could not bear it: It made *David* Pſal. 38.3. cry out, *There was no reſt in his Bones, becauſe of God's Anger.* Nay more, It made the

Lord

Lord Jeſus Chriſt cry out, when he endured it for our Sins, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And, ſays Conſcience, can you bear it? can you ſtand under his Anger? According to thy Power, ſo is thine Anger.

2. Conſcience reflects upon the Soul's Pollution and Defilement; another ſad effect of Sin. That a Soul which came out of the Hand of God ſo pure, ſo ſpotleſs a Being, ſhould be ſo deformed and defiled: O, how ſad is this!

3. Another ſad effect of Sin, that the awakened Conſcience reflects upon in a day of Affliction, is the withdrawment of God's comfortable Preſence from the Soul. O! how did the Spouſes Conſcience

ence Reflect, when she said, *My Beloved hath withdrawn himself.* Sin makes God hide himself from his dearest Children. And, O what temptations are God's Children exposed unto, when their Father is withdrawn. O, how easily then are they drawn in to think hardly of God, to be jealous of God, to question his Promise! I might name many other sad Effects and Consequences of Sin, that awakened Consciences Reflects upon. (But I will forbear).

The Third Query is this, What kind of Reflections these Reflections of awakened Consciences are?

1. These Reflections are home Reflections. O Sinners! when Conscience Reflects

flects and charges it home, (this was the caſe of my Text) it was a home charge, *Verily, we are guilty concerning our Brother.* O, how quick was Conſcience now with them! And ſo when *David* reflected upon his Sin, charged upon him by *Nathan: Thou art the Man,* (ſays *Nathan*). *I have ſinned* (ſays *David*). It may be for the preſent, your Conſciences ſay little to you, are very ſilent; but ſtay until God ſhall awaken them, O then, until your Sin be pardoned, it will be a Terror to you, and cauſe you to meditate Terror. What though this Lion ſleep, day will come that God will rouze him up, and then he will be a Roaring Lion. O, what an home

Re-

Reflection was that of *Judas*, *I have sinned, in betraying innocent Blood.* And surely *Peter*'s Conscience charged him home, when he went out and wept bitterly.

3. These Reflections of awakened Consciences, they are just and righteous Reflections. O! Conscience does not reflect without a Cause; doth not accuse or sting without a Cause. Was there not a Righteous Cause for this Reflection in the Consciences of *Joseph*'s Brethren? Was there not great Guilt at the bottom? Did *Cain*'s Conscience affright him without a cause? had not he killed his Brother *Abel*? Did *David*'s Conscience smite him without a cause, when he cried out, *I have sinned?* Did *Judas*

his Conſcience torment him without a cauſe, when he cri'd out, *I have ſinned, in betraying Innocent Blood?* Oh Sinners! When you look into your paſt Lives, and turn over the Book of your Converſations Page by Page, Leaf by Leaf, and obſerve Page and Margin well, you will find both full of cauſes for theſe Reflections: May not you charge your ſelves for this Sin and the other? for this unknown Guilt to the World, and the other? O then you will ſay, it is a righteous thing that Conſcience ſhould Condemn, and that the Sentence thereof is a juſt and righteous Sentence. We reade of him that had not on the Wedding Garment, his Mouth was

ſtopt, he ſtood ſpeechleſs. So will it be in this Day, with all poor guilty Sinners, they will not have a word to ſay for themſelves, why Sentence ſhould not be Executed upon them. Every Mouth muſt be ſtopt, that all the World may become Guilty before God.

Rom. 3. 19.

3. Theſe Reflections are full of Horrour and Dread. Fear naturally reſults from them, and you know Fear hath Torment in it. Theſe Reflections become great Torments to guilty Conſciences; the inward gnawings of this Worm are very terrible. Alas, what can ariſe out of Guilt (Sinners) but Dread and Horror? Guilt, we ſay, makes a Man affraid of his own Shadow. O, what

torment is this when a Man comes to be dogg'd and haunted where-ever he goes, with with his own guilty Conscience! He needs no other Executioner, or Tormentor. The Case of *Spira* is a dreadful standing Instance. *Herod* heard of the Fame of Jesus, and said unto his Servants, *This* John Baptist, *he is risen from the Dead, therefore mighty Works do shew themselves in him.* What was the matter with *Herod*, that he was thus startled, and crys it was *John*? He had killed *John*, and now *John*, though dead, walk'd in his guilty Conscience, and as a *Spectrum* dreadfully affrighted him. Mat. 14. 2, 3.

4. These Reflections of guilty awakened Conscience are not easily quieted.

Conſcience is not eaſily pacified. *Luther* hath this paſſage, *It is as hard a thing to comfort an afflicted Conſcience, as it is to create a World.* God Iſa. 57. 19. ſays he, *created the fruits of the Lips, Peace, peace*; (*viz.* in his Miniſter's Mouths when they are *Barnabaſſes* Sons of Conſolation to troubled Souls. O! Who can ſpeak Peace to a Wounded Conſcience, but God? He only can ſay to poor Souls in danger of being Shipwrack with theſe Storms of Conſcience's Troubles, *Peace, and be ſtill.* The Lord Jeſus can only command theſe Winds and Storms to obey him. Thus it was with *David*, the Lord had ſent *Nathan* the Prophet to him, to tell him, God had put away his

Sin

Sin, yet all this would not do, until the Lord told him ſo himſelf; which occaſioned that Prayer of his: *Lord, make the Bones which thou haſt broken, to rejoyce: Make thou me to hear the Voice of Joy and Gladneſs.* Pſal. 51.8

5. Theſe Reflections of awakened Conſciences, are ſuch as conſtrain the Sinner to ſeek out for eaſe. Poor Souls now dwell in little eaſe, they are diſquieted and diſtreſſed, and therefore look out for a Remedy. *A wounded Spirit, who can bear?* Wounded Men, you know, groan for eaſe: So do theſe wounded Souls. Hence it was that *Cain*, under the horrour of his awakened Conſcience, begins to build Cities, to divert the rage of his throb-

ing Conſcience. Many Sinners, when awakened and troubled, they go to the Muſick (with *Saul*) to play the evil Spirit down. It is ſaid of *Charles* the *9th*, King of *France*, after that dreadful Maſſacre in *Paris*, which was in his Reign; He never durſt awake out of his ſleep without Muſick. So many go to ſinful Company, and ſinful Recreations, to make uſe of them as a ſleepy Sop, to allay the rage of an accuſing tormenting Conſcience, as tho they had a deſign to Conjure down the Guilt that walks in their Conſciences. But now, when a poor Soul is truly awakened with a clear ſight of Guilt in the Glaſs of the Goſpel, O then he begins to pray, to ſeek out after Chriſt,

to

to enquire what he ſhall do to be ſaved, to be pardoned. O! how do ſuch poor Souls, like the ſtung *Iſraelites*, under the ſmart and pain of the Wound, run up and down to look towards the Brazen Serpent for Healing? And like thoſe prickt in the Heart, cry out, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?*

Firſt Reaſon, Why Conſcience in a day of Affliction, is quick at Reflections: Becauſe days of Affliction, are days of Remembrance. Conſcience ſets Memory now at work, and now Memory turns over the whole paſt Life of a Sinner. O, ſays Conſcience in the day of Diſtreſs, Didſt not thou commit ſuch a Sin at ſuch a time? in ſuch a place? Doſt thou not remem-

ber it? And didſt not thou think thou ſhouldſt never hear of it again, though I told thee, and warned thee to the contrary: but now I am come to call thy Faults into remembrance this day. In a day of Affliction, Conſcience is our Monitor, and Remembrancer. It remembers the Sinner of two things,

1. Of his paſt Convictions.

2. Of his broken Reſolutions. And it is upon this account, that Repentance is called, A remembring of our evil ways.

You have, Sinners, committed many a Sin, and forgotten it, and buried many a piece of Guilt in the grave of Oblivion; and becauſe you had forgotten theſe things,

things, you thought God had forgotten them too, and Conſcience had forgotten them, but you will find your ſelves miſtaken. When a day of Affliction comes, then Conſcience will remember you of all, and ſet all in order before your Eyes. *David* calls ſome of his Pſalms, *Pſalms of Remembrance*; To call to Remembrance. So Conſcience will ſing you a ſad Song of Remembrance (as I may ſay); it will remember ſome of you, how often you were Drunk, and where; how often others of you have been Unclean, and where; with all the Circumſtances of matters of Fact.

Secondly, Becauſe in a day of Affliction, Conſcience is awakened, at other times it

is asleep, and so cannot be quick and active. Men lull Conscience asleep with their Enjoyments, or with their Affairs and Employments; but now in a day of Affliction, the Lord takes them off these. They then are at leisure to reckon with their Consciences: as they awake, they begin to call themselves to an Account. Afflictions are great Awakeners. It may be, the poor Sinner is like *Peter*, asleep between two Souldiers, when the Angel came and smote him. So Conscience doth with Sinners. O! how quick is Conscience with them, when they are awakened? O! what a sleepy Fit for three quarters of a Year did *David* fall into, until God made use of

Afflic-

Affliction to awaken him? *Joseph's* Brethren, what a Lethargy were their Consciences in for many years together, until this Affliction awakened them? And so, How did *Manasseh* his Afflictions awaken his guilty Conscience?

Thirdly, Because a day of Affliction is a day of serious Consideration; Men go on inconsiderately in the Ruffe of their Prosperity, while they are (as I may say) in their hot Blood: but when they consider with themselves better, then they change both their Minds and Courses. *I considered my Ways, and turned my Feet to thy Testimonies.* Psal. 119. 59. But now, What brings in this day of Consideration? Is it not a day of Affliction?

In

Eccles. 7. 14. *In a day of Adversity, consider.* What brought the poor inconsiderate Prodigal to a stand and so to a return, was it not a day of Affliction? His consideration is expresst by this: *He came to himself.* Now Conscience being awakened, Sinners begin to come to themselves, and then they Jer. 8. 6. say, *What have I done? Whither have I been going?* O! what will follow upon this Course of mine? what will be the effects of this Sin and Guilt? If Men did consider these things, and ask their Souls such Questions, how would it be a means to stop them in their carreer and course of Sin? O now,

1. A Sinner begins to think how he hath dishonour'd God.

2. How he hath displeased God.

3. How

3. How he hath wounded his own Conſcience.

4. How he hath led others into Sin by his example.

5. How he hath aggravated his Sin, by ſinning againſt Mercies and Deliverances.

Theſe, and many more, Conſiderations are called over in the Conſcience, when awakened in a day of Diſtreſs and Affliction.

Fourthly, Becauſe a day of Affliction, is a Day that puts the Sinner upon a diligent ſearch. O, how quick is Conſcience upon the ſearch! Now Sinners are ſet upon ſearching & trying their ways (with the Church): *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord.* This Lam. 3. put *Heman* upon a diligent ſearch: *I communed with my own.*

Pſal. 77. 5, 6. *own Heart, and made a diligent ſearch.* As the Woman did ſeek for her loſt Groat, did ſweep the Houſe, and lighted a Candle: So now, the Soul in a day of Affliction, ſeeks and ſearches for this Sin, and the other. Surely (ſays the awakened Conſcience) there is ſome Provocation, there is ſome Wedge of Gold, ſome allured Thing, ſome right Eye, ſome right Hand, which puts the Lord upon contending with me, and upon thus afflicting of me. Thus *Joſeph*'s Brethren, they ſearch and find out their Guilt in the day of their Diſtreſs and Affliction.

Fifthly, Becauſe a day of Affliction, is a Day of plain and impartial dealing with ones own Soul. We are

p. one

prone to be Partial at other times; and flatter our ſelves; but now Conſcience being awakened, it deals faithfully, as the Matter requires. O! now Conſcience in the day of Affliction, tells the Sinner a plain ſtory. Sinner, thou haſt ſinned, and thou canſt not deny it; and thou muſt repent of it, or elſe periſh to all Eternity: *Except you repent, you ſhall likewiſe periſh.* Now this is a plain Sermon; and thus did *Joſeph*'s Brethren, Their Conſciences in their Affliction, told them a very plain Story: *We are verily guilty concerning our Brother*, &c. And, ah Sinners! had not your Conſciences better be plain with you now, than be plain with you in Hell; O what plain Sermons doth Conſci-

ence

ence preach to the Damned! You will not, many of you, bear plain Preaching now; But, O remember, what a plain Preacher Conſcience will be when awakened in a day of Affliction!

Now we come to the Improvement of what hath been ſaid upon all the Doctrinal part.

Application. Is it ſo that Conſcience is ſo quick and active in a day of Affliction? Then

1. Learn we hence that many Souls have great cauſe to bleſs God for Afflictions. They may ſay (with *David*) Pſal. 119. 67. *Before they were afflicted, they went aſtray.* *Joſeph*'s Brethren (for any thing I know) had died under this Guilt, if God had not brought them into this Diſtreſs. Had not

Manaſſeh

Manasseh cause to bless God for his Affliction? They were blessed Bryars he was caught in. Hath not the Lord opened the Ears of many by Affliction? and commanded them to return from Iniquity? Yea, great Persons, when they have been bound in Fetters, and holden in Cords of Affliction, then God sheweth them their Work and their Transgressions, that they have exceeded. O! what a Mercy was it to the Church, when God hedged up her Ways with Thorns? Is it not a mercy to be kept from drowning in a Pit, though it be by a Thorn Hedge? How many sinners had gone on in Sin, and had been drowned in Hell, if God had not stopt them by a sharp Thorn Hedg

Job 36. 8, 9, 10.

of

of Affliction? O! What would have become of the Prodigal in a far Country, if the Lord had not found him out by Affliction? It is said There is an antipathy betwixt the Serpent and the Nightingal; and while the Serpent lies in wait for the Nightingal, she sets a sharp Thorn to her Breast, lest she should sleep and so be surprized, and when ever she is heavy, the Thorn pricks her, and makes her sing with renewed Chearfulness. O poor Souls! how many have cause to bless God for putting a sharp Thorn to their Breasts, to keep them awake, lest they should be surprized by the wily Serpent, that lies in wait for precious Souls.

2. Learn we hence not to con-

conclude, becauſe Conſcience ſleeps at preſent, that it will always do ſo. Though it ſleep now, a day of Affliction will come, and then it may awake, and tell you many a ſad ſtory. You think, poor Sinners, all is well after the Fact is committed, if Conſcience ſay nothing to you: But alas, the worſt is to come, the Reckoning Day is yet to come. Stay until God bring thee into the Bryars, or upon a Death-bed, and it may be thou wilt then tell another ſtory: The longer Conſcience ſleeps, the louder will its Noiſe be when once it awakes. But what if it do not awake at all here? Then it will awake hereafter, it will awake in Hell. There is not one ſleepy Conſcience

ſcience there. But, O Sinners! had not your Conſciences ten thouſand times better awake here, when and while there is Hope?

3. Learn we hence what a ſad Judgment a ſeared Conſcience is, which makes no Reflection at all; which never ſmites a poor Sinner, but lets him run headlong to Hell. O what Wrath like this! what Plague like this! to have an hardned Conſcience, a Conſcience paſt feeling? Such as can boaſt of Sinning, and their Conſcience, never trouble them, God hath ſaid to ſuch, as once to *Ephraim*,

Hoſ. 4. 17. *He is joyned to Idols, let him alone.* And, O what a Judgment is this, for God to wink at Sinners Damnation! (as *Luther* ſays) *Wo to that*

Man

Man whose Sins God winks at.

4. Learn we hence, what a Mercy a tender Conscience is; a Conscience that reflects in a day of Affliction, that smites a Man for what he doth. These Smitings and Reflections are great Mercies, for they are in order to bring Souls to Repentance, whereas you might else have died in your Guilt unpardoned. O! Bless God when your Consciences recoil upon you, and tell you, you have Sinned. It was the commendation of *Josiah*, that *he had a tender Heart.* 2 Chron. 34. 27.

5. Learn we hence the Reason why many Sinners have confessed that under Affliction, that they never did, nor never would confess before.

before. Conſcience would not let them alone, they could not be quiet. Guilt was like Poyſon to them, if the Party do not Vomit, he dies for it; all comes out in a day of Affliction, that lay hid before. Afflictions are great Diſcoverers. Nay, how do ſome guilty Sinners in this caſe, like Sea-men, that caſt that over-board in a Storm, that they wiſh for again in a Calm. O, do not many confeſs and diſcover that in a ſtorm of Conſcience, that they wiſh they had concealed and kept in? Horror of Conſcience extorts many a Confeſſion from guilty Sinners.

The ſecond Uſe. Is it ſo that Conſcience is very quick and active in its Reflections in

in a day of Diſtreſs and Affliction? Then it is a word of Caution:

1. Take heed of not hearkening in a day of Affliction to the voice of Conſcience. O, take heed of turning a deaf Ear to a ſpeaking Conſcience! If ever it will ſpeak in this Life, it will ſpeak then when thou art in a day of Affliction. Do not as theſe Brethren did, who hearkened not to the anguiſh of their Brother's Soul, when he beſought them. O, do not ſo with your Conſciences! O, do not ſay in this matter, as he did to *Paul*, *Come again at a more convenient time, and I will hear thee.* O poor Sinners! there can be no more convenient time in the World than a day of Affliction.

1. Sin-

1. Sinners, know if you hear it not now, it may be it will ſpeak no more. Hearken to it while it is to Day, the Oracle will be ſilent to Morrow. O! What if this ſhould be the laſt time, the laſt words that ever your Conſcience will ſpeak to you, and yet you ſhould be deaf to it would not this be ſad?

2. Sinners, what if the next time that Conſcience ſhould ſpeak to you, it ſhould be in another World? What if thou ſhouldſt hear a voice from the Damned, ſay, as was ſaid to *Saul, To Morrow thou ſhalt be with us*? What if thou ſhouldſt not live till to Morrow, and thou be dead to Conſcience to day? Had not you better hear your Conſciences now, than hear them in Hell?

3. Sin-

3. Sinners, know the Voice of Conſcience is the Voice of God, it hath its Commiſſion from God. He hath bid Conſcience ſpeak to you, convince you, warn you, caution you, ſmite you. Go (ſays God) to Conſcience, and talk with ſuch a poor Sinner, who hath wronged and wounded his own ſoul, and diſhonoured my Name, and warn him from me: And tell him from Me, except he repent, he ſhall periſh in his Sins. And will you refuſe to hear ſuch a Meſſage from God in a day of Affliction?

4. Sinners, know this, It will aggravate your Guilt exceedingly, to be deaf to the Voice of Conſcience in a day of Affliction. Indeed

it is ſo at any time, but much more in a day of Diſtreſs. Such Reflections as you have turned a deaf Ear to, will be great Aggravations againſt you another day. *If I had not come and ſpoken to them* (ſays Chriſt) *they had not had Sin.* Their Sin had not been ſo circumſtantiated; as may be ſaid in this caſe. If Conſcience had not Reflected upon you, convinced you, reproved you, you had not had Sin, but now your Sin remains.

John 15. 22.

5. Sinners, if you hearken not unto your Conſciences in a day of Diſtreſs, it is an argument you are hardned in your Sins; if thus deafned, then hardned: If deafned Wretch, thou will prove an hardned Wretch

O now, if Sinners would put all theſe together, they would ſee need of this Caution, to take heed leſt they ſhould turn a deaf Ear to Conſcience in a day of Diſtreſs.

Second Branch of the Caution. Take heed of ſtifling and ſtrangling the Reflection of Conſcience in a day of Affliction: This is very dangerous, and yet very ordinary. *The Lord made Man Righteous, but he hath found out many Inventions.* And ſome of theſe Inventions are to ſtifle and ſtrangle Conſcience, to overlay the Reflections of awakened Conſcience; as the Woman overlaid the Child. O, how many Sinners have overlaid their Convictions! Some go to their Comforts, ſome

to their Cares, ſome to their Pleaſures, and all to ſmother Conſcience. Some Sinners take theſe following Courſes to murder their Convictions.

1. They run further into Sin. Will this ever prove a Remedy? Will not this make the Wound to bleed ſo much the more? To run into ſinful Company when wounded in your Conſciences, will not this inflame the Reckoning? Is not this to run ſo much the more upon the ſcore with God? O, Sinners, let me tell you, all theſe Arrears muſt at the long run be reckoned for.

2. Others they run to lawful Comforts and Enjoyments, and ſo labour to ſtifle the Reflections of their guilty Conſciences.

3. Others

3. Others they run to their lawful Employments, as *Cain* did to build Cities; ſo ſome go to their Trades, to their Shops, on purpoſe to drown the convictions of their own guilty Conſciences.

4. Others go to their ſinful Recreations, Carding, and Dicing, and Gaming.

5. Others make Charms of their Duties and Forms, as *Papiſts* go to their [*Pater Noſters*], and their [*Ave Marys*]; nay, may not this piece of refined Popery be in the Heart of ſuch as call themſelves *Proteſtants?* But alas, all theſe cannot bear down an awakened Conſcience when God ſets Guilt on.

The Third Uſe, Is a word

of Exhortation to poor guilty Sinners: O! then yield an Ear to the Reflections of your own Conſciences. Many a Man's Conſcience cannot be heard by him; it checks him, and chides him, and reproves him, but yet all this while the Sinner ſtops his Ear, as the deaf Adder, of which ſome write, That ſhe claps one Ear to the Earth, and covers the other with her Tail. O, hear Sinners, then what Conſcience hath to ſay. Hearken to the Preacher in your Boſoms. Turn you about, Sinners, once before you die, and liſten to this Preacher.

1. Sinners, if you will not hear it now, you muſt hear it whether you will or no hereafter: And, O how ſad will it

it be to hear it there, *Where the Worm never dies, and the Fire never goes out.* This Worm is the guilty Conſcience, which Sinners muſt hear in Hell, if they will not hear it here. Guilty Conſciences preach in Hell, and the Sermon is as long as Eternity it ſelf; and happy were the Damned, if they could run away from theſe Sermons. O Sinners! you cannot ſtop your Ears in the other World againſt your guilty Conſciences, as you do in this. Maak 9. 44.

2. Sinners, hearken to the Reflections of your own Conſciences; for your hearing them will be in order to the getting of your Sins pardoned. Its Reflections are in order to your Repentance, and your Repentance will be

in order to your Remiſſion. They are both put together, and preached in the Name of Chriſt together: And would not you be glad to have your Sins pardoned? Would not you be glad to have your Sins waſhed away in the Blood of Chriſt? Would not you be glad to have this heavy and inſupportable burden of Guilt removed off the back of your Conſciences? Are your Sins gone over your Heads as a Burden, yea, as too heavy a Burden for you to bear, and would not you rejoyce to be led to Safety and Reſt, under all your Loads and Preſſures?

3. Be ſure you attend to the Reflections of your Conſciences, for the Rod joyns iſſue with Conſcience; the Rod

ſets

ſets Conſcience on work, and they preach the ſame *Doctrine*. Therefore we are called, and ſtrictly charged to hear the Rod. It may be, Sinners, God hath tried other Preachers, and they have done little good, to make you ſenſible of your Guilt, then God commiſſions theſe Preachers, Conſcience, and the Rod. If a Man cannot come abroad and hear a Miniſter, then Affliction ſhall preach to him at Home. Now the Rod is aſſiſtant to Conſcience, the Preacher in your Boſoms. Mic. 6. 9. Job 24. 13.

4. Sinners, be not deaf to the Reflections of your Conſciences; this is to ſin againſt your Light, nay, to rebel againſt your Light. And is not this ſad? and the guilt of this Rebellion

you will be charged with another day.

5. (Poor Sinners!) Be not deaf to the Reflections of your own Conſciences; uſually God follows ſuch with his ſevereſt Judgments.

1. Sometimes Temporal. Many times God makes that threatning good upon ſuch: Pſal. 68. 21. *I will wound the hoary Scalp of every one that goes on in his Treſpaſſes.* If Men will walk on in their Sins, contrary to all checks and convictions of Conſcience, let them look for ſome ſevere blow of the Hand of God upon them, ſooner or later; for tho the Sentence be not ſpeedily executed, it is not ſaid, it never ſhall. Tho Execution-day be for a while deferred, yet it will come.

2. Spi-

2. Spiritual Judgments, which are the worſt and ſaddeſt of Judgments. Many times Sinners deaf to their Conſciences, are given up to a ſeared Conſcience, to a reprobate Mind, to vile Affection, to their own Luſts, to hardneſs of Heart: And is not the judicially hardned Sinner, the half-damned Sinner?

The Second Branch of Exhortation is, To ſuch as have Reflecting tender Conſciences. O then, bleſs the Lord for ſuch awakened Conſciences! It is a greater Mercy than you think of, to have ſuch a Monitor and Remembrancer in your Boſoms.

1. Is it not a Mercy to be way-laid in a ſinful Courſe? To be prevented in Sin? To be

be ſtopt in a Carreer and full Gallop for Hell? This, this is the end why God ſets Conſcience at work with a poor Sinner; Had not many poor Sinners run headlong to utter Deſtruction and Damnation elſe. May not many a poor Sinner ſay to Conſcience, as *David* did to *Abigail*, *Bleſſed be the God of* Iſrael, *that ſent thee this day, to prevent me from ſhedding innocent Blood.* When thou haſt had rebukes of Conſcience, haſt thou not ſaid, as *Balaam* to the Angel, in his way to ſtop him, *If my way be perverſe before the Lord, and diſpleaſe thee, I will get me back again.* And is not this a Mercy?

1 Sam. 25. 32, 33.

Numb. 22. 34.

2. Is it not a Mercy to be raiſed to Re entance after falling into Sin? The Sinner's Sin-

Sinning is his Fall, the Sinner's Repentance is his Rising. And are not all Conſcience's Reflections, when it is awakened in order to Repentance? (as hath been already hinted): and is not this a Mercy to be pluckt as a Firebrand out of the midſt of the burning? O! how doth Conſcience give many a pull at ſome Sinners, to get them out of the Fire, leſt it ſhould prove the Fire that never goes out!

3. Is not this a Mercy to have thy Soul lie in the way of a Pardon? Canſt thou, O poor Sinner! expect Remiſſion without Repentance? Haſt thou any Promiſe for it in all the Bible? Produce it if thou canſt? O! whoever told thee ſo, but Satan and thy

thy own deluding Heart? Do not all Offenders that receive Pardons from their Princes, receive them upon their Knees? Whither is it thy awakened guilty Conſcience would ſend thee, but to the King of *Iſrael*, that *Merciful King*, with Sackcloth upon thy Loins, and an Halter about thy Neck, in order to the receiving of thy Pardon?

Third Branch of the Exhortation. O then, bleſs the Lord for days of Affliction and Diſtreſs! Becauſe theſe are the eſpecial times when Conſcience makes ſuch quick Reflections upon Souls. Are not ſuch afflictions great Mercies, as are ſanctified means in the Hand of God, to awaken poor guilty Souls? Had not you better be awakened by Affli-

Afflictions, than periſh in your Sins? O, how many poor Souls had run headlong to Hell, if a Thorn Hedg of ſmarting Affliction, had not ſtopt them? (as hath been noted already) Are not Afflictions Mercies. which are means to awaken ſleepy Conſciences, which otherwiſe might have ſlept on to Hell elſe? Is it not a Mercy to be rouzed out of our Security? Suppoſe a Man ſleep upon the Bank of the River, had not he been better awakened, tho it be by pinching, than ſleep on until he drop in and be Drowned? Is not this the Caſe? There are many poor Souls that lie aſleep on the brink of the Pit, one turn by Death on the other ſide, and the Sinner is gone, and gone for ever. But

But, me-thinks, I hear a poor Soul ſay, What ſhall I do? what Courſe ſhall I take? The guilt of my Conſcience lies like an heavy Load and Weight upon me. I am dogg'd with the ſenſe of my guilt Day and Night. My Sin is ever before me. Let ſuch troubled Conſciences take theſe Directions.

1. Freely confeſs thy guilt to God. Thus *Joſeph*'s Brethren did in the day of their Diſtreſs. Thus all Conſciences when wounded, ſhould bleed by Confeſſion. Thus *David*: *I have ſinned*, &c. Thus the poor Prodigal: *Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee*, &c. The Promiſe runs to confeſſion of Sin: *He that confeſſeth, and forſaketh his Sin,* Prov. 28. 13.

ſhall

ball find Mercy. If we con- 1 John 1.
feſs our Sins, God is Faithful 9.
and Juſt to forgive us our Sins.

2. Be much upon your Knees, praying for Pardon. O, what will make a Man pray, if ſenſe of Guilt will not! Need any put words into the Mouth of a condemned Malefactor, to beg the Judge to be good unto him? How ready is he to cry, Good my Lord, have Mercy? O, what Petitioning will there be to the Judge! O, poor guilty Sinner, ſee this Courſe taken by *David*; *Lord, have Mercy upon me*, &c.

3. O, run believingly to the Blood of Chriſt! Your Confeſſions, your Prayers, your Tears, will not do without the Blood of Chriſt; thou

muſt

muſt get further (*viz.*) To the Blood of Sprinkling. This is the Blood that cleanſeth from all Sin, and all Unrighteouſneſs. Here, here is the Fountain for guilty and for filthy Souls to waſh in.

4. Defer not your Repentance, this is dangerous when under ſenſe of Guilt. You can ſay in other Caſes, there is danger in delays: O, why do not you ſay ſo in this? O poor Sinners, ſleep not in your Guilt! A wounded Spirit muſt be taken betimes, as well as a Wound in the Body the Wound will get wind elſe, and will feſter; this will make dreadful work if once Guilt gangreen and feſter. O, how hard will gangreen'd Conſcience be to Cure.

5. Di

5. Direction is, Lay hold by an hand of Faith, upon your precious Promiſes in the Goſpel held out to you. O, poor guilty Sinners are all for application of Threatnings, and alas, this makes the Wound deeper and wider. O, how do ſuch Sinners when they neglect Goſpel-Promiſes! Hath Chriſt purchaſed ſuch precious Promiſes to lie by you? O, what a ſin is Unbelief, to null the Promiſes of God! to make them void, and of none effect. Are theſe Cordials provided for Sin-ſick Souls, and will they not ſo much as taſte of them? Will not God take this ill at your Hands? Is not a Goſpel-Promiſe, a proper Plaſter for a wounded Conſcience? O, that all guilty Sinners

ners were well ſtudied in Goſpel-Promiſes! Might not they then eſpie a door of Hope, concerning their pardon of Sin and Guilt? *Yea, tho their Sins were as Scarlet,* (ſuch were *Joſeph*'s Brethren, in my Text) *yet they ſhould be as white as Snow. And tho they were as Crimſon, they ſhould be as white as Wooll.* O, what a Mercy, poor Sinners, would this be, to be awakened by the Reflections of your own guilty Conſciences in a day of Affliction, and for all to end and iſſue in Remiſſion and Pardon!

Iſa. 1.

FINIS.